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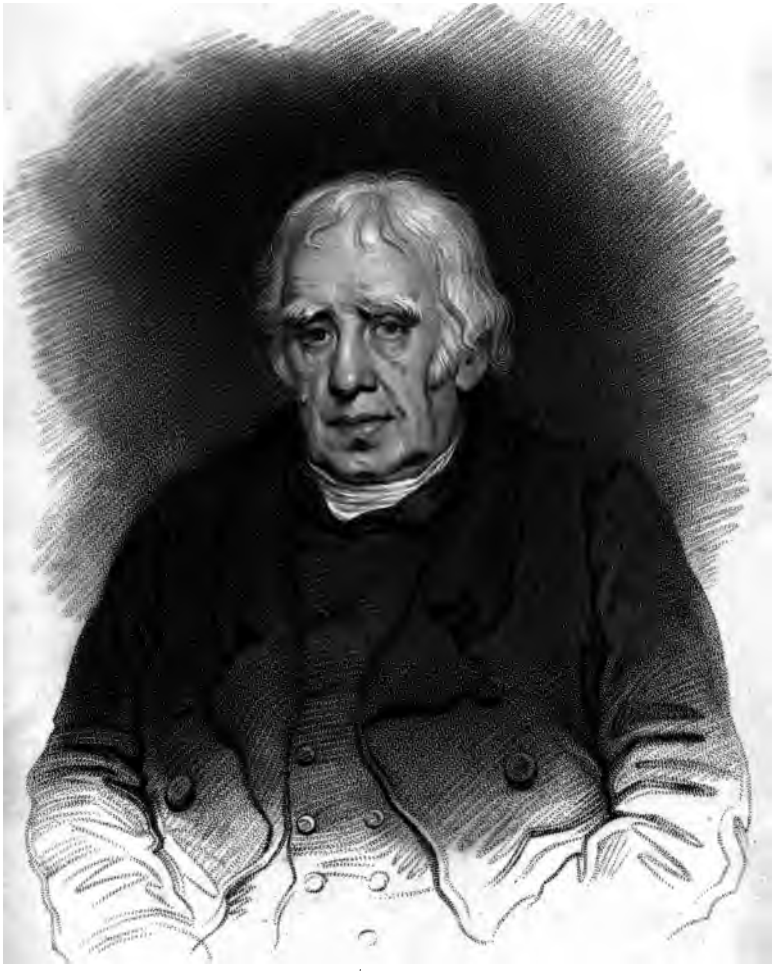
MEMOIRS

OF THE

REV. JOHN TOWNSEND.



John Townsend

MEMOIRS

OF THE

REV. JOHN TOWNSEND,

FOUNDER OF THE ASYLUM FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB,

AND OF

THE CONGREGATIONAL SCHOOL.

" A Christian is the highest style of man."

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. B. AND JOHN COURTHOPE, 10, GEORGE-YARD, LOMBARD-STREET :

SOLD ALSO BY HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO., PATERNOSTER-ROW; HATCHARD AND SON, PICCADILLY; B. J. HOLDSWORTH, 18, ST. PAUL'S-CHURCH-YARD; KINGSBURY, PARBURY, AND ALLEN, LEADENHALL-STREET; NISBET, BERNERS-STREET, OXFORD-STREET; SEELEY AND SONS, FLEET-STREET; AND SIMPKIN AND MARSHALL, STATIONERS'-COURT.

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LONDON.

MILLS, JOWETT, AND MILLS, PRINTERS,
BOLT-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

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PREFACE.

CIRCUMSTANCES over which Mr. Townsend's family had no control, have caused a delay in the publication of this Volume, which has been to them a source of pain and regret. During his last illness, Mr. Townsend intended to consign his papers to the flames, but the voice of affection pleaded for their preservation.

These pages are humble in their pretensions, like the honoured subject of them: his aim, was to improve and benefit mankind —theirs, is to excite young Ministers to the same patient Industry, indefatigable Zeal,

and honourable Emulation, which marked his career. To the more private Christian, their perusal, it is hoped, will be soothing in the hour of affliction, and cheering in the prospect of death.

MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. JOHN TOWNSEND.

CHAP. I.

Mr. Townsend's birth, education, and conversion.

THE Objects of Biography, in general, are instruction and example; but religious Biography has another and a higher aim, namely, to "magnify the grace of God" in the subject of the narration: it is to concur in the great design of JEHOVAH himself, who said concerning Israel, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise."* Men of the world, in writing their own memoirs, have uniformly an eye to the advancement and display of their character and talents; and even when they admit their failings and indiscretions, (as they call them,) it is only with a view to set off their supposed virtues. Not so Mr. Townsend; the facts and circumstances

* Isa. xliii. 21.

which he records, and especially his reflections on them, which are numerous, have a direct tendency to self-abasement, and at the same time to glorify God by the acknowledgment of his providence and grace. His language uniformly corresponded with that of the Psalmist, "Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."*

Such being the object of the original papers before us, in preparing this narrative for the religious public, our duty will be to pursue the same design; and to show how much persons, neither elevated in rank, nor endowed with extraordinary genius, may yet effect, by God's assistance, for the advancement of his honour, and the benefit of their fellow creatures.

Mr. John Townsend was born March 24, 1757, in the parish of Whitechapel, and baptized by the curate of that church. He had not, indeed, to boast of a noble or rich ancestry, but his father had received his education from a respectable clergyman in Yorkshire, under whom he attained a considerable acquaintance with the Latin tongue. In early life he settled in London, in a family where the late Mr. Whitfield, of pious memory, used to visit, and was so much charmed with his vivacity, and the interesting nature of his conversation, that he was led to hear him preach; first at Allhallow's church, and afterwards at the Tabernacle, near Moorfields, of which congregation he became eventually a stated member. This, however,

* Psal. cxv. 1.

so degraded him in the estimation of his father's family, that he was menaced with loss of station and property. His god-mother, a rich aunt, promised to make him her sole heir, if he would forsake "*that enthusiast;*" a whole night was passed in entreaties and discussions, but conscience or principle prevailed over human pride and policy. The treasures of Egypt were renounced, the humble path of poverty chosen, and things eternal estimated more highly than things temporal.

On this circumstance Mr. Townsend himself remarks, "It is a greater mercy to be the child of providence than the child of fortune. How many have I seen left by their parents in affluence, but it 'made to itself wings and flew away.' I am perhaps placed in easier circumstances than some of those who inherited the property referred to. It is an honour to descend from those who suffer for righteousness sake."

"I owe much (says our deceased friend) to the love and care of an affectionate mother, not only for her regard to my personal safety, but also for her instruction and admonitions. Well do I remember standing at her knees to repeat Dr. Watts's hymns, and kneeling to say my prayers, which was often very irksome to me, and which I therefore tried to evade by the most frivolous excuses. As a proof of her regard to my religious interests, I recollect that on one occasion, when I had committed a great fault, and then told a falsehood to conceal it, (having the strongest pos-

sible conviction of my guilt,) she kept me fasting in my chamber till I confessed my sin." This to some may appear as a trivial circumstance; but as Mr. T. doubtless recorded it by way of admonition to his own family in the first instance, so we retain the fact as an admonition to parents in general, never to trifle with the truth, nor to pass over a falsehood, as a slight and venial fault: nothing, indeed, was more conspicuous or admirable in Mr. Townsend's character, than his sacred regard to truth in all his conversation.

It is a trite remark, the truth of which is often verified, that a particular providence attends on children. The subject of this memoir experienced much of that superintending care; some years afterwards, referring to recovery from a malignant disease, he writes, "God has protracted my journey in the wilderness to see new mercies, and to experience new deliverances, both in providence and grace."

Mr. Townsend received the first rudiments of his education, as most of the first scholars in the world have done, from "a good old lady, for whom he always entertained a strong recollection of esteem;" in which he may put many of us to the blush, who generally undervalue the pains and patience required to instil into young minds that A, B, C, which is the foundation of all literature. From this tuition he was put successively to two boys' schools, where he made but little progress; and his mother, anxious that he might have a good education, and finding the expense likely to be in-

convenient, by means of one of his father's more wealthy brothers, procured him a presentation to Christ's Hospital. This was in the year 1774.

During the five years of his continuance in this excellent school, Mr. T., who suffered no event to pass unobserved, records many juvenile circumstances, which it might be tedious to our readers to detail; but the following are judged worth preserving. The first is much in honour of the establishment just named. "Its masters," he remarks, "possessed first-rate talents: the discipline of the school (so far as discipline in large schools can be maintained) was good. The steward, Mr. Perry, was a rigid and vigilant disciplinarian, and the slightest deviation from order and morals was reproved and punished; and no age or connexion could save the delinquents. I had a proof of this in my own experience. Playing in the cloisters one day, I *profaned the name of God*, and having been overheard by a governor, he reproved me for the sin. I felt conviction and shame, but hoped nothing further would be said about it." His fault, however, was reported to the steward, and he was placed at the *stone** with another juvenile offender. Next morning, before his punishment was decided, Mr. Bowyer, the grammar-master, with whom he appears to have been rather a favourite, inquired as to his offence, and finding him penitent, and determined not to

* The stone stands nearly in the centre of the dining-hall, at which all who were guilty of offences stood during the time the boys were at dinner, preparatory to their being punished on some future day.

repeat his crime, procured a remission of his corporal punishment, though he suffered the loss of some privileges, which was at that time a severe trial.

About the same period a most afflictive circumstance occurred in the ward to which young Townsend belonged. A boy in climbing fell, and was so dangerously wounded that he died soon after. On this occasion, according to established custom, the boys followed the corpse round the hospital, singing the funeral anthem. The procession did not begin to move till after the gates were shut. The stillness of the walks compared with the buzz of the play-hours; the darkness of the night, illumined only by lamps and flambeaus; the sweet and solemn music of the anthem sung on this occasion; all these circumstances conspired to promote reflection, and encourage the most serious thoughts. "This service (says Mr. T.) made a deep impression on my mind. I felt some alarm for myself; the sins of my youth lay with weight upon my conscience, I was perplexed about the way of remission and pardon; but I solved it in this way to myself; that those who had not sinned so much as others were forgiven, nd the more wicked punished. The good and ious instructions I had received under the pa- rnal roof, were almost forgotten. During the years of my attendance at church, while at ol, I remember only one text and sermon excited my attention. That sermon was hed against the Methodists, from the words c, (ver. 19.) *Sensual, having not the Spirit.*

Knowing my father to be a hearer of Mr. Whitfield, and of course involved in this erroneous application of the text, I was roused, and felt some indignation against the preacher."

The hymns and prayers which his pious mother had taught him, were brought to his recollection by a singular providence. The Rev. Mr. Pentycross, afterwards for many years the laborious and useful Rector of Wallingford, was then a scholar in the same ward with him. During the first part of that time, he was extremely fond of theatrical amusements; and used, on the summer mornings, to call up the boys in that ward, to recite and act certain parts of the plays which were then in a course of representation at the London theatres; and to this the nurse made no objection.* In a short time, however, the mind of young Pentycross underwent a surprising change; and became as deeply "imbued with the truth and spirit of the scriptures," as it had been with the genius and sentiments of Shakspeare. The nurse was now most dreadfully alarmed, and tried to persuade the boys not to attend to his *preachments*, as she called them; but they were pleased with the novelty of the thing, and found it so much more interesting than sitting still on the sabbath

* This circumstance is more fully related in a Memoir of Mr. Pentycross, inserted in the Evangelical Magazine for 1808, (p. 454); and we learn from one of Mr. Townsend's MS. notes that he communicated the materials of that life to the writer, whose signature was R—, and who, as the Editor is confident, was at that time minister of the Independent congregation in that town.

evenings, that they persevered in their attentions, and the old lady was induced to make a regular complaint. Upon this, the monitor (Pentycross) was called up, and the steward (Mr. Perry) heard his explanation. He stated, that the exercises complained of consisted, principally, in hearing the boys repeat their catechism, in asking them questions on their different answers, and in showing them the importance of what they were engaged in. Upon this the steward dismissed the complaint, observing, that as Pentycross was a Grecian, and monitor of the ward, he employed his time usefully, and begged the nurse no more to interfere.

These sabbath-evening exercises Mr. T. considered as useful to him, in bringing to his recollection what he had heard, both in the public ministry of the word, and the pious exhortations of his parents. His early convictions of the evil of sin were also revived and strengthened.

The moment now arrived for another conflict betwixt worldly interest and conscientious scruples. Mr. T.'s uncles wished him to remain at Christ's school, that he might be sent to college on the foundation; but his father seeing in the son no indications of that fitness which is required in ambassadors from God to men, decided against the plan. An offer was then made to place him in a public office, but that also was declined by his excellent parent, who feared his child might not resist the ensnaring temptations of the world. Thus, apparently destined for obscurity, the future philanthropist and useful minister was

placed as an apprentice to his father, who rejoiced in the power thus given him, of introducing his son to the circle of friends from whose society and conversation his own happiness was derived. But youthful passions for some time destroyed the hopes of the pious father, who with grief saw the child of many prayers, acting in opposition to the precepts inculcated by the ministers he attended. Alluding to this period, Mr. Townsend himself says:—"It was impossible to hear such preachers as Messrs. Hill, Berridge, Edwards, &c. without some light and conviction flashing upon my conscience. I could plainly perceive that my life was utterly inconsistent with the doctrines and precepts of the Bible; and so deep was the distress which I sometimes felt under faithful and searching discourses, that I could not avoid shedding tears. These impressions led me to make many vows and resolutions, that I would give myself up to the service of God. But, alas! my efforts often proved like the green withes which bound Samson!* Though I was sometimes terrified by the awful denunciations of Sinai, yet my sins appeared most hateful, and my relentings most deep and abiding, under those discourses which set forth the infinite riches of God's grace, and the value of that blood which cleanseth from all sin."

About this time, many excellent Christians used to assemble at seven o'clock on the Sunday mornings to receive the Sacrament at Tottenham-

* Judges xvi., 8, 9.

Court chapel; and as several of them came from a considerable distance, *they* used afterwards to breakfast in the vestry; and as the subject of our memoir was the son of one of Mr. Whitefield's oldest friends, he was admitted to breakfast with them, and was much impressed by their serious deportment and edifying conversation. Mr. Smith, the governor of Tothill-fields Bridewell; sometimes invited him home to dinner, and in the afternoon he took him into the prison chapel with him. He read the church service with great solemnity, and then expounded part of a chapter in a most serious and affectionate manner. Some of the prisoners were very attentive; and it is clear, from the sequel of our friend's narrative, that he considered Mr. Smith an eminent Christian, and his friendly advice had, in consequence, a great influence upon his mind. The scenes, also, which he witnessed in that prison, served to deepen his conviction of the evil and danger of sin in general.

Among the many sermons which Mr. Townsend now heard, that which most deeply impressed his mind, and which he reckoned most effectual in his conversion to God, was one preached at Tottenham-Court chapel, by Mr. (afterwards Dr.) *Peckwell*, from Psalm ciii. 13—"As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Alluding to this circumstance many years afterwards (in 1816), when himself preaching in the same chapel on behalf of the Missionary Society, Mr. T. thus expressed himself—"It was in *this* house of God that the Gospel came home to

my rebellious heart with a saving power. I have in my immediate view the spot where I sat, when, with a mind deeply impressed, and eyes streaming with tears, I implored the mercy of heaven. Nor can I say, whether I wept most tears of sorrow, because I found myself a lost sinner; or tears of joy, because I perceived the fulness and the freeness of that salvation, which I have long been, and am still, privileged to preach to others."

The Christian life was now commenced in spirit and practice, self-indulgence was resigned, and the pure principles of our holy religion acted on, and evidenced in every part of the subsequent conduct. No time, no effort was hereafter considered too great to be devoted to the glory of God, and the good of man.

CHAPTER II.

From Mr. Townsend's conversion, 1774, to his final settlement at Bermondsey, 1784.

THE humility which characterised the eminent subject of this memoir, even when he had become the object of universal esteem and love, is conspicuous in the circumstances which attended his progress towards the ministry. With the consciousness that he had neither education nor talents for this important office, his reading and his friendship were yet insensibly leading him to a public station. Theological studies he pursued with avidity, sermons were treasured up in his memory, and afterwards committed to paper. To strengthen his religious principles, he decided on becoming a member of the Tabernacle. The examination he passed before one of the ministers of that connexion, seems to have been remembered long after, and to have given him unusual tenderness on receiving candidates for admission into his own church. Regular meetings for prayer and conversation were attended, and at these some of the young men attempted to expound a passage of Scripture, that their knowledge might be increased, and a facility of speaking acquired. Mr. T.'s most intimate friends were Mr. Bryson, Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Green, with the latter a sincere attachment appears to have been formed.

The Rev. George T., elder brother to Mr. T. who had been educated at St. Paul's school, having entered the ministry under the patronage of the Countess of Huntingdon, had given an exhortation which appears strongly to have impressed the mind of the subject of this memoir; who, delighted with the talents and piety of his brother, was equally charmed with the respect and attachment he appears to have elicited from his hearers.

On Mr. George Townsend's leaving London for Trevecca, accompanied by the friends above-named, Mr. T. formed a strong friendship with Mr. Beck, to whom he acknowledged himself deeply indebted as his counsellor and guide; indeed it is evident that his persevering advice first overcame the timid reluctance of Mr. T. to engage in public services. The latter frequently accompanied his friend to the various places round London, where he was accustomed to preach. On one of these occasions, Mr. B. being indisposed declined the afternoon service, and requested the subject of this memoir to take his place. After enduring much distress and anxiety of mind, and fearing to disappoint the people, he consented, and gave an exhortation, urging the necessity of religion to promote the happiness of man, whether in this world or the next. Referring to this circumstance in his journal, Mr. T. remarks, " I had no wish to intrude into the ministry: had I consulted my own family, I should probably have been discouraged, as they had no idea I possessed

talents for so important a station. Providence effected it in a gradual and silent manner, most congenial to my own feelings and habits. I continued my visits to Mitcham, praying and occasionally exhorting in the little chapel, when owing to a sudden indisposition Mr. B. insisted on my preaching. In the most candid manner I expressed dislike, urging my insufficiency and unpreparedness, which would increase my diffidence and fear. It seemed impossible to enter the pulpit before I had obtained a more full and accurate acquaintance with divinity, and till I had studied at some college. My friend now endeavoured to convince me, that the various exhortations I had given, had afforded considerable satisfaction, and that whatever was my ultimate destination, I ought to exercise my "talent" till some arrangement could be made, as proofs had already been given of my acceptance and usefulness. The conversation was closed by an assurance, that as illness prevented his preaching, I must be responsible for the disappointment of the people. This threw my mind into a state of much perplexity and agitation, its reasonings and fears were beyond any thing I can describe; a sense of duty decided me to overcome my reluctance, and as some hours intervened, I prepared the skeleton of a sermon; selecting that easy and familiar text, from Luke xii. 32—"Fear not, little flock," &c.

My distress of mind on riding to Mitcham was so great, that I thought I must have returned; on

my arrival, anxious to find an apology to the manager of the chapel for my apparent intrusion, I said,—*It is a week-night, and an emergency.* My fear and trembling were great, but I looked to God for strength and assistance, and found them; yet such was my terror that the pulpit shook beneath me. I had made rather a long plan, and if ever I cried to the Lord for help, it was at this time. When I had read the text, my fear so far subsided that I was enabled to forget every thing but my subject, and I found tolerable ease of expression. After the lapse of an hour, finding I had not proceeded more than half through my subject, I left off abruptly. On entering the vestry, many individuals came forward to express approbation and pleasure. Among the number were a lady and gentleman, the sight of whom had increased my distress, as I knew they were accustomed to hear Mr. Romaine, and Mr. Foster. The lady, who on first seeing me had objected to my youth, said, this young man would be acceptable for one Sabbath at Kingston. The gentleman, Mr. Whitver, of the Ordnance Office, now pressed my consent to this; but I refused, on which he replied, God has given you talents, and you must use them. I returned home with very different feelings. "*The Lord,* as it were, *turned my captivity,* and I was *like them that dream.* It was a night long to be remembered. To this hour, when I look back to it, and review all the circumstances of the case, my reluctance to engage, and my fear and agitation, I think it was obvious to the

people that I was oppressed in spirit; and *this*, under the divine blessing, disarmed them of their prejudices, created their sympathy, and constrained them to pray for me; and their prayer seemed to return into their own bosoms, for they not only came to me and expressed kindness and good wishes, but they seemed to have sat under the shadow of the tree of life, and *found its fruit sweet to their taste.* Oh, how wonderful that the feeble efforts of an instrument so weak and insignificant should be effectual, in the hand of the Most High, of good to souls; but I recollect where it is said, *We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* 2 Cor. iv. 7. Still I have often looked back with feelings of anxiety and regret, and feared lest I did wrong. I have not only felt, but mourned the want of those advantages which I might have had, if I had resolutely persevered in my first intention of going to some academical institution before I commenced preaching; for it will be seen that this first sermon led to the abandonment of the plan of going to college, and became the step to all that series of services which followed, and to that chain of connexions into which I have been insensibly conducted. On the other hand, when I call to mind the goodness and mercy which have accompanied me in my progress, how much acceptance and success have attended my ministerial labours, I am overwhelmed with surprise, and hope I feel both humility and gratitude."

Upon his return home our young friend visited Mr. Beck, and told him of the invitation he had received to Kingston, which the latter advised him to accept. When he pleaded his deficiency in theological knowledge, Mr. B. recommended to him the study of the Scriptures, the use of the Concordance and other works, giving him the Thesaurus Biblicus of Bernard. Some days afterwards a letter was received from Mr. Whitwer, renewing with earnestness the invitation. With reluctance it was accepted, Mr. Townsend candidly saying, he had so little knowledge and experience in divine things, that he could not enter the vineyard without that course of study, which would enable him to become an acceptable and useful labourer.

Preparation for the services at Kingston was now requisite, and the sermon preached at Mitcham was divided into two, and re-written. On his arrival at the former place, his juvenile appearance struck the manager with surprise, who expressed apprehension that the importance of pulpit duties had not been sufficiently considered. To this, Mr. Townsend replied, that he had yielded very reluctantly to Mr. Whitwer's solicitations. After the services of the day were concluded, many thanks were offered, with an expression of general approbation, and a request that the visit might be renewed. This was promised, and he preached a second Sabbath at Kingston.

Arrangements were now made, with the consent of the managers of the Tabernacle, for his preaching at various places in the vicinity of

London. At this period much caution and diligence was used in preparing the skeletons of his sermons, and he was gradually being trained for more permanent situations. Shortly after, he was sent for six weeks to Lewes; where the public services were twice on the Sabbath, once in the week, and occasionally in the surrounding villages. The members of the family in which he resided were excellent and amiable, and he met with universal cordiality and kindness. An accident discovered to him some boxes filled with works of the Puritans; these gratified his taste for divinity, and supplied him with materials for future years. Here he became acquainted with Mr. Cecil, with whose preaching he was much delighted; Mr. C.'s sermons were expository, and his critical remarks important, as he was going through the historical parts of the Old Testament.

The congregation becoming much attached to their young supply, application was made to the managers of the Tabernacle for his longer continuance. To this they assented, but, shortly afterwards, Mr. Townsend was seized with a serious illness, on which the physician recommended him to resign preaching entirely. This he declined, and, with the aid of medicine, and the kind nursing of his hostess, soon recovered.

At this period, he obtained Claude's Essay, and De Laune's Plea for the Nonconformists; these authors appear to have decided him in favour of dissenting principles, as he writes thus in his journal. "When I had read these works, I saw the propriety and justice of the principles

and practices, both of ancient and modern Nonconformists, and became settled in my determination to cast in my lot among them. I was much interested in Robinson's attack on the errors of Laud, &c.; and the persecuting spirit of the high church party in the time of Charles II. made me more anxious to become acquainted with the writings of those excellent men, the sternness of whose honesty, and the value and importance of whose principles, had induced them to forego all connexion with a church whose honours and emoluments were as open to them as to others."

A country life was new to him, and its simplicity and quiet appear to have suited his taste. One of his most pleasing excursions was to Heathfield, where resided a man eminent for religion and usefulness. This was Mr. Gilbert, who, after having served his country under Prince Ferdinand, and the Marquis of Granby, retired to a country village, and devoted himself to the service of the King of Kings. His resources were slender, but his energies were mighty; the former were assisted by a society in London. The reading of the Scriptures to a few individuals was the commencement of his labours; then succeeded the reading of sermons, and, finally, an entrance into the ministry. This excellent man died in 1826, after having been the instrument of introducing the Gospel into nearly sixty villages, in many of which chapels have been erected, and stated pastors settled. How faithful is that God, who has promised to bless even the feeblest efforts in his cause!

After a happy residence at Lewes, of eight months, Mr. Townsend was summoned to London. The feeling of regret, at parting, was mutual between minister and people. His kind host presented him with many of the books which he had read with unceasing pleasure. Of this worthy man and his amiable wife, Mr. T. ever retained an affectionate recollection. Recording his return to his paternal roof at this time, he writes—"It is impossible for me to express the delightful feelings which occupied my bosom as I approached the humble dwelling in which I was born, and where still resided the dearest objects of my natural affection."

Here Mr. Townsend pauses to make the following reflections.—"I cannot review this first year of my ministerial career without stopping to acknowledge the great goodness of God, and giving Him the praise of all. I went out from my father's house, from my acquaintance and friends, without knowing whither I went, and, at the same time, worse furnished for the duties I had to perform, and the difficulties and dangers which I had to encounter, than, perhaps, any young man who ever entered into the christian ministry. But He who numbers the hairs of our heads, and suffers not a sparrow to fall to the ground without his notice, gave me his gracious assistance, preserved me from the evils into which the carelessness of youth, and the inexperience consequent upon it, have hurried many a promising young minister; and gave me an unexpected, and I may add, undeserved acceptance in the eyes of the

people. I went out empty and returned comparatively full. I went out into the ministerial field of labour, with only one talent in knowledge and gifts; but now, through the diligent use of reading, meditation, and prayer, and the blessing of the Great Head of the Church, that one talent has increased to five. For it is with humility and gratitude, and to the praise and glory of 'the Father of Lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift,' that I venture to say my capacity for acceptable and useful preaching, when I returned from Lewes, compared with what it was when I went there, was in the full proportion of five to one. I had not only acquired more knowledge, by reading and study, but I had discovered, through an acquaintance with 'Claude's Essay,' some glaring inconsistencies in my composition, especially the practice of accommodating texts. This determined me to make it my first object to discover the true meaning of the words, by a careful perusal of the whole paragraph with which they were connected, as well as by a reference to the principal characters and circumstances to which they stood related. I acquired, also, more order and regularity in the disposition of the matter I intended to deliver, more skill in the choice of words, more self-possession in my delivery, and greater ease and dexterity in the use of my notes, to which I closely adhered."

On Mr. Townsend's arrival in London, he found himself appointed to the station at Kingston; many of the leading persons there, having been delighted with his plain and unadorned sermons.

The reception he met with, was kind and affectionate, and arrangements were finally made for his settlement. The salary was small, not more than sixty pounds a year, and, of that sum, one individual gave twelve guineas.

Fixed in this situation, he commenced Greek and Hebrew, which he soon laid aside that he might devote his whole time to theology, in the study of which, he passed fourteen, and sometimes sixteen hours a day. His aim was not to shine as a speaker—to preach useful and instructive sermons was his highest ambition. It may not be unprofitable to the reader, to young ministers especially, to trace the probable progress which the subject of this memoir made, to the honourable and influential station which he afterwards filled in society. Humility, and a deep sense of his own insufficiency and weakness, were the bases of future influence and usefulness. Conscious of the necessity of extraordinary diligence, he seized every opportunity of increasing his limited knowledge of scriptural and experimental theology. That he might collect a store of excellent and interesting materials for ministerial use, he adopted the following plan, which is given in his own words. —"Method being necessary, I procured three quarto books, consisting of four hundred pages. One of these, I appropriated for the Old, another for the New Testament, and the third, for a body of divinity alphabetically arranged. If any text, either in private or family reading, impressed my mind, I indulged the feeling, and wrote all that was freely suggested in its proper place. The

first train of thought sometimes branched into so many parts, and with such facility, that in a few minutes I had formed a plan for an hour in preaching. On reading a well-written book, or on conversing with well-instructed Christians, I marked every thing new and important, treasuring it up in my memory, till I had an opportunity of committing it to paper. Somewhat resembling the industrious bee, I strove to make the flowers of every garden contribute to increase the stock of my (as yet) ill furnished hive." This practice so enlarged his treasures in divinity, that his books were soon filled, and to these was added a large store of materials, written on loose pieces of paper, as he never walked in the country without providing himself with the latter, and a pencil, that some meditation or remark from the work he was reading might be preserved. This habit gave him such facility in writing, and induced such a power of abstraction, that when he afterwards became so fully occupied in committees, he could write during the progress of speeches to which he intended a reply, and yet take up every point of discussion in the clearest and most perspicuous manner. The contemplations of Bishop Hall were a source of rich instruction and entertainment. So enraptured was he with their beauty, and so charmed with the light which they threw on the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, that he would scarcely allow himself time for food or rest. Gurnall's Christian Armour was also a favourite work at this period. Through the influence of a friend he received a large box of

books from the late John Thornton, Esq., among which was Brown's Self-interpreting Bible, and his Dictionary. These made a good addition to his yet small, but, to him, valuable, library. "Among the many ways (remarks Mr. T.) in which rich Christians may do much good, one is to give a few standard books in divinity to poor students, who have not the means of procuring them, and to whom, if I may speak from experience, they would be more precious than gold."

On the 1st of June 1781, Mr. Townsend was ordained Pastor of the Independent Church at Kingston; having the consent of the Society to model it according to the usual order of that denomination. In the same month he was united in marriage to Miss Cordelia Cahusac; concerning whom, he thus writes in his diary several years after, (but without date):—"Her person, her piety, her prudence, her industry, her economy, have been all that a Christian could expect or desire. She has been a help-meet in reality. In our lives we have been pleasant to each other; and our parting will be truly painful. But oh! the blessedness of a good hope through grace. Our friendship will be renewed and perfected, and will become unfading in the kingdom of glory." To meet the increase of family expenses, Mrs. T. in 1783 commenced a boarding school. Many anecdotes are left on record, of the effects produced on the minds of the young people, by the amiable and blameless conduct of her husband, whose example influenced, even more than his precepts.

Kingston was a barren and unpromising soil:

religion was much neglected. Like Gallio of old, the higher classes cared for none of these things, and the lower were so irreligious and brutal, that they sometimes assaulted those who attended at the Meeting. The minister having incurred a risk of personal injury, had the ringleaders secured and brought before the Magistrates, who committed them to Bridewell. The offenders were, however, liberated, on giving security for future good behaviour; as prevention of the evil, not revenge, was the only remedy sought. On referring to this period in his journal, he writes,—" I can say I was not much depressed by the reproaches or persecutions of the world. These things were to be looked for, in such days of darkness and prejudice. But I began to feel some of the cares and difficulties of a settled minister. The vile and detestable heresy of antinomianism began now to spread through the whole vicinity of Kingston, Mr. Huntington's place of residence. Weekly sermons were preached by him at Thames Ditton and Richmond. Though he spent his Sabbaths and most of his days in London, yet these weekly services constituted a rallying point, not only for such as had imbibed the poison so artfully blended in his writings, with the great doctrines of the holy Gospel of Christ; but, also, for all that were constitutionally fickle, or of a rugged and restless temper of mind. Every effort was made by the party that could be devised, to inoculate the whole church and congregation with their unscriptural sentiments, and with their more mischievous temper. Every new book written by their oracle,

Mr. H., was circulated with the utmost avidity, and the most uncandid and illiberal construction was put upon every sermon I preached; and some even of the most eminent of my hearers in seriousness of spirit and holiness of life, were maligned as Arminians and enemies of the Gospel." Circumstances like these necessarily pain and discourage dissenting ministers; but they are of little weight, compared to those trials which arise from the irregular and unholy conduct of others, who appear attached to the minister, and for whom he, in return, feels a pastoral affection. Such cases, however, will occur, notwithstanding the utmost care in the admission of members; one of this nature now called forth Mr. Townsend's firmness and fidelity. The member whose conduct demanded expulsion, was connected with an intimate friend; but church discipline, and a holy jealousy for the cause of God, triumphed over private feeling.

Antinomianism at Kingston produced that at which it ever aims,—the removal of a minister, who preaches the necessity of faith, and yet exhibits the moral law as the rule of life. Mr. T., though much beloved by the respectable part of his congregation, thought it a duty to resign his charge, and communicated his intention to some friends in London. One of these was the Rev. Anthony Crole, on whom deputies from the congregation in Jamaica Row, Bermondsey, had waited, to consult him on the choice of a Minister. Arrangements were subsequently made for Mr. T.'s stated labours among them, which commenced on the Sabbath after Midsummer Day, 1784.

To some of the little flock at Kingston, he felt a strong attachment. There were individuals to whom his ministry had been made useful; two of these afterwards became pastors of Baptist Churches. One striking fact occurred, which appeares worth recording. A youth, who projected a crime of great magnitude, attracted one evening by the light, strolled to the little chapel, at the moment the minister was reading the text from Numbers xxxii. 23.—*Be sure thy sin will find thee out.* Conscience became alarmed, the violated law of God with its consequences was pourtrayed, and bore a terrifying aspect to the listening sinner, who believed detection must ensue, if the intended sin were committed. The impression remained, and a holy and consistent life has been the result.

CHAPTER III.

From Mr. Townsend's settlement at Bermondsey, in 1784, *to the formation of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, in* 1792.

THE congregation at Jamaica Row consisted of almost every denomination of Christians, among whom were Arians, the remains of Dr. Flaxman's hearers. Mr. Townsend's first object was, to form a church on the model of congregational dissenters. Introductory to this, he preached on the principles, duties, and character of church members, taking the holy Scriptures as the basis of faith and practice. The faith and conduct of every member were to be subjected to christian inspection; it was intended to exclude those, who were uninfluenced by the power and purity of religion, and to admit those, who were *renewed in the spirit of their minds and who were holy and unblameable.*

Mr. Townsend was set apart over the church and congregation, Oct. 28, 1784. On this occasion, the Rev. Mr. Crole delivered the charge from 2 Timothy iv. 2. *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.* The Rev. Dr. Addington preached from Phil. i. 27. *Let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ.*

The peace of the infant church was broken by the introduction of Mr. Huntington's sentiments into the neighbourhood; the moral poison of which infected some of the members, fourteen of whom were desired to withdraw. During a long ministerial life, our deceased friend's tranquillity as a pastor was never again interrupted.

Being now settled in the vicinity of London, he frequently went to hear the Rev. William Romaine, and the Rev. Henry Foster. He hoped to derive much advantage from frequent intercourse with the independent ministers of the metropolis, but in this he was disappointed, as he received nothing more than cold civility. Conversing with his friend, the Rev. Mr. Crole, on the subject, they both lamented the want of a more close and intimate friendship with the ministers of the congregational denomination. As the pastors of the *regular* churches (as they were called,) thus stood aloof, those men who wished to act upon more enlightened and liberal principles; who felt that a diffusive spirit ought to mark the servants of God, determined, if possible, to form an union of such ministers as were unconnected with the Board. A meeting was called to carry this plan into effect; and the following ministers entered into the union:—The Rev. Messrs. Crole, Cottingham, Morton, Humphreys, Myers, J. Towers, T. Bryson, J. Townsend and T. Williams.

At this interview it was unanimously resolved, that two objects should be embraced; a monthly meeting of the ministers for the discussion of

theological subjects; and another for prayer and a sermon. This union was denominated the *Evangelical Association*; and the monthly meeting of ministers connected with it was held in Pinner's Hall vestry. "They were to me (observes Mr. Townsend) seasons of great pleasure, and, I hope, of much profit. We were all, I believe, younger men than Mr. Crole, and esteemed him as our monitor. His affable and unassuming manners, united to a sound understanding, and a comprehensive and familiar acquaintance with theology, rendered him the object of our veneration and love."

A list of subjects was printed, and the lectures were well attended. To render the association useful, they connected with it preaching in the villages round London. Three places were regularly supplied by them in rotation, *viz.* Wimbledon, Poplar, and Lambeth.

Not many months after the formation of this society, Mr. Townsend became more intimately acquainted with several ministers of the Board; some of whom wished him to become a member, but this he declined, as he was already united to a very pleasant association. Notwithstanding this refusal, he had reason to believe that he was proposed at a general meeting, but that the proposal was withdrawn, on account of the opposition made to it by one individual, whose spirit was not imbued with that love, which at present pervades every class of Christians. "If I judge correctly, says Mr. Townsend, there were two grounds of

prejudice against me in the mind of this sensible and worthy gentleman (for so he unquestionably was, notwithstanding the narrowness of his mind;) the one, that I had not had what he esteemed a regular introduction into the christian ministry; and the other, that I often preached in places where the Liturgy of the Church was read."

The poor of Rotherhithe being in a sad state of irreligion and ignorance, some of the parish officers requested him to attend the poor-house, and preach gratuitously. To this he consented, though his ordinary engagements were five sermons in the week. The first text was from the 1 Cor. ii. 2. *For I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* One of the churchwardens, a zealous and ardent churchman, wrote a letter, containing expressions of disapprobation that a dissenter should preach to the ignorant paupers; intimating that evil consequences must arise from such an anti-episcopal service. After this opposition Mr. T. withdrew from the post of gratuitous chaplain to these poor people.

The year 1787 introduced him to an extended sphere of ministerial usefulness. Many are the jewels which will adorn his crown of rejoicing in the great day of account, from his introduction to Orange-street chapel.* When this

* This chapel belonged originally to the French Refugees in the reign of Charles II. and was occupied by their successors till the year 1776, when the Rev. A. M. Toplady engaged to occupy it on Sunday and Wednesday evenings, and there closed his life and labours in 1776. It was then occupied by the Rev. Messrs. Cecil

place was opened under the Act of Toleration, he preached on the first sabbath.* The impression made on the trustees, induced them to request a permanent arrangement for four sermons in a month. To this assent was given, and the pulpit labours of thirty-nine years, have left on record numerous interesting facts of persons in various ranks of life, who there heard the tidings, first proclaimed by the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem. As a dissenter, Mr. T. was censured by some who were more rigidly attached to systems than himself, and the following remarks appear in his journal.

Dining with a friend, the conversation turned on the order and consistency, which should be preserved by dissenting ministers; and it was said that, for the latter to preach in chapels, where the Liturgy of the Church was read, marked a dereliction of principle. "I affirmed," says Mr. T. "that it was the duty of the christian minister, to preach the Gospel *when* and *where* opportunity offered; that this was acting on the extensive and unlimited nature of the first commission: *Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature;*—

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and Foster, till they removed to Long Acre Chapel, after which it was licensed, and came into the hands above-mentioned. See *Wilson's* Dissenting Churches, Vol. iv. p. 22.

* His text was Ephes. i. 7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood,* &c. This first sermon, Mr. Townsend notes, was blessed to the conversion of a niece of the Rev. Mr. K. who went expecting to hear the Rev. Rowland Hill; she afterwards joined Mr. T.'s church, of which she was an honourable member.

that the Apostles and early ministers of the New Testament, proclaimed the whole counsel of God in private houses, market places, Jewish synagogues, heathen temples, &c. To come nearer our own times, the eminent men ejected by the Act of Uniformity, would have exercised ministerial duties in churches, could they have so done without wearing the surplice, and conforming in other contested points; that if to preach in chapels was to be vile, I would be still viler, for, could permission be obtained from Romish Priests, I would stand on the altar after mass had been performed, and proclaim to the erring disciples of Popery, the Power and the Grace of that Saviour whose Gospel they have perverted, and whose ministers they have persecuted."

The amiable spirit which began at this period to steal over the christian world, may be considered as the dawn of that glorious era, which has since witnessed the union of churchmen and dissenters, when the great interests of their common faith required their co-operation. The principalities and powers of darkness had, by the universal bigotry of christians, brought back the dark ages, even in the reformed churches of the eighteenth century.

In the autumn of this year died the Rev. Dr. Peckwell, and as he had been well known to most of the congregation at Orange-street Chapel, Mr. Townsend was requested to preach a funeral sermon for him, which he did from 2 Sam. iii. 38. *Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?*

On the day which ushered Dr. Peckwell into the world of spirits, the excellent and affectionate mother of Mr. Townsend closed her eyes on the cares and enjoyments of life. Her loss gave rise to the following reflections, which must be given in the words of her son:—"Peace to thy memory, thou tender, affectionate, and faithful guardian of my youthful years! To thee, I owe, under God, the education I have obtained, and, consequently, the honourable station I fill, and the useful, though not splendid, services I have been enabled to render to the Church and to the world, for a long and happy course of years. Thy sterling worth, my endeared and departed parent, is now imprinted so deeply on my heart, that scarcely one day passes without paying to thee, in the recollections of my mind, some homage of esteem and affection. While my eyes were blessed with the sight of thee on earth, I had not fully learned thy excellence, nor felt thy intrinsic worth!"

"Take, young people," proceeds Mr. Townsend, "a lesson of instruction, and appreciate more carefully the inestimable value of wise and affectionate parents, whilst they live. Let them have the full and overflowing gratitude of your heart, and suffer not any of their sighs and tears to originate in your thoughtlessness or your disobedience; and, as much as possible, contribute to soothe their anxious minds, to alleviate their growing infirmities, and, if needful, to relieve their temporal necessities."

"And you, fond and anxious parents, who have sacrificed your ease, your rest, your worldly pro-

perty, your health, your all, for the comfort and prosperity of your offspring; perhaps, too, for unfortunate, for disobedient, yea, even for cruel children; it may be you have wept, you have prayed over them, you have waited and longed for their return to the paths of righteousness; but all is still unpromising and dark; you refuse to be comforted, fearful that your grey hairs may go down to the grave with sorrow. Be not cast down, there is yet hope. Continue to wrestle for the blessing; God is all-powerful and gracious. Prayer and faith may yet do wonders. Those children over whom you now weep, may, by and by, weep over your tomb, and repent of all the wrong they have done to fond and afflicted parents, and go, perhaps, from your grave to the footstool of the throne of grace, crying, *Father, we have sinned against heaven and before thee.* Remember He is faithful who has promised. For myself, I will hope even against hope. I cannot well do otherwise, because I have seen so many instances in which a parent's influence has been felt after he has passed into the world of spirits. Scarcely has he ceased to breathe, when the blessing has descended in copious streams. Perhaps the very departure of a praying parent has been the arrow that penetrated the thoughtless heart of the wayward child,—the wanderer from the paths of righteousness. Surely in such cases, parents, who have departed in the faith will share the joy which is in heaven on the return of the repentant prodigal."

The year 1788, being the centenary of the glo-

rious Revolution, to which England owes her civil and religious liberties, a considerable feeling was excited among the Dissenters, and several sermons were preached to commemorate it in different parts of the kingdom. Highly as Mr. T. estimated that event, he so entirely disapproved of political sermons, that, when invited to preach on that day for the Middlesex Charity School, he stipulated that no *allusion* even should be made to the centenary. His text was—*Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thy increase.*

CHAPTER IV.

The Institution and progress of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum.

If the glory of England consist much in the abounding charities that spread over her land—if to relieve *physical* evil, be the honour of man, how much greater must be that of the philanthropist, who combines moral and religious relief with intellectual improvement; who raises a *human* being from a state of mental vacuity, to the enjoyment of the best feelings and faculties of our nature; who gives to *destitute* beings a power, by which they are raised from dark and dreary ignorance, to become useful members of society.

A Benedictine monk in Spain, towards the close of the sixteenth century, first made the essay to instruct the deaf and dumb. Our own countryman, Dr. Wallis, succeeded in the seventeenth, and about the same period, Ammon, a Swiss physician, published a treatise on the subject. These all exerted their energies to relieve the children of the *rich;* the benevolent mind of John Townsend aimed to extend the blessing to the *poor.* About fifty years since, a few inefficient efforts were made to found a similar Institution, and his Majesty, George the Third, gave 100 guineas towards carrying it into effect; but neither royal munificence,

nor feeble wishes could accomplish so mighty an undertaking. It was left to the persevering, arduous, indefatigable exertions of an humble individual, whose heart beat with love for the human race, to devote himself, and engage others, in this majestic work, till it rose in his own life-time, a monument of British generosity, and British sympathy.

In his ministerial relation, Mr. Townsend became acquainted with a lady, whose son was deaf and dumb, and who had been a pupil of Mr. Braidwood's almost ten years. The youth evinced an intellectual capacity which caused delight and surprise to the good pastor, who was astonished at the facility and accuracy, with which ideas were received and communicated. Mrs. C., the lady referred to, sympathising with those mothers whose circumstances precluded their incurring the expense of 150*l*., (which was the sum paid by herself,) pleaded the cause of those afflicted and destitute outcasts of society, until Mr. T. entered into her feelings of commiseration, and decided with her on the *necessity* and *practicability* of having a charitable Institution for the deaf and dumb children of the poor.

On the Sabbath day, June 1st, 1792, were commenced the subscriptions, which were to receive additions little calculated on, by the small band who gave their first offering to induce their excellent pastor to begin this noble work of mercy. Three friends contributed one guinea each; Mr. Townsend gave the fourth. This was, apparently, a feeble foundation on which to commence an undertaking which, even on the most contracted scale,

required hundreds; but energy and perseverance can accomplish much, when the heart is under the influence of Him who said, *Be merciful as your Father in Heaven is merciful.*

The next morning he waited on Mr. Henry Thornton, who discovered that urbanity of manners and that philanthropy of heart, for which he was so highly distinguished; but as he had never seen a deaf and dumb child, he thought the number would be too small to form the projected Institution. To this was urged the assurance given by Mrs. C., that she knew several, and had heard of many: Mr. Thornton then promised his support, and his banking house was named, with several others, to receive subscriptions. A prospectus was sent to the Times and Morning Chronicle, the circulation of which brought many applications from the poor, and, what was still more important, a visit from Dr. Watson, who offered himself as tutor, which station he still occupies with honour to himself, and advantage to the establishment. To prove the activity of Mr. Townsend, a letter from a poor fisherman, soliciting attention to his afflicted child, and dated so early as June 11th 1792, was found among his papers. At this period Mr. T. was going to visit his brother at Ramsgate; on the route he distributed the printed notices in the different towns and villages, and gave them to the innkeepers, that travellers might see them.

After his return from Ramsgate, where a few subscribers were procured, he took some of the hand-bills to the Rev. Henry Cox Mason, then

minister of Bermondsey, who at first seemed indifferent to the object, and smiled at the undertaking as romantic. In a few days, however, on Mr. Townsend again seeing him, he gave his name as a subscriber, offering to distribute the printed notices among his friends. This delighted Mr. T., who knew he had an extensive acquaintance, and that from his natural activity and energy of mind, if he entered into the object, "he would be a host." The subscribers now became numerous, as the result of united and individual exertion; and, to form an extended and effective plan, a list was drawn out of different persons known to each, and Mr. T. says,—"Many a laborious day did we spend together in this work of faith and labour of love. My friend, from his flow of spirits, his smart and ready way of stating the case, and the facility with which he rebutted objections, and overthrew frivolous excuses, was wonderfully fitted for the undertaking. In all our peregrinations, I give him full credit for being the Aaron in this exploit. I do not say we met with any whose hearts were altogether as hard as Pharoah's; but we did meet with some, who, not only refused to help us, though well able, but also insulted us. One instance of this I cannot help reciting: we had on our list the name of a wealthy surgeon; he belonged to an institution to which was attached a chapel, at which my friend had often preached; and, of course, we believed that this would prove a successful visit. We were ushered into a splendid room, where the gentleman was sitting at a late breakfast, with a foot-

man on each side of his chair. My companion opened his brief in his best style; but, before he could finish the first paragraph of his story, he had said enough to indicate it was a case of charity; and this lordly son of Galen instantly exclaimed, 'Sir, I shall not give you any thing.' My zealous friend would fain have proceeded, but he was cut short by a rejoinder, in a more angry tone than at first: 'Sir, I shall not give you any thing. John, open the door, and let the gentlemen out.' It was done instantly, and we made our bow, happy to escape from so much pride and consequence."

In the month of August 1792, the first general meeting of the subscribers was called. Mr. Henry Thornton was appointed treasurer, and the Rev. Mr. Mason, secretary. A committee was appointed, consisting of churchmen and dissenters. A suitable house was then taken in the Grange Road, Bermondsey, and Dr. Watson was engaged as tutor. On the 14th of Nov. the first election took place, four children were admitted, and two more in the course of the year.

The Asylum was now founded. Providence smiled on these works of charity, subscribers increased, and the number of admissions augmented. Churches and chapels were obtained, that collection sermons might be preached, and on these occasions a boy repeated the Lord's Prayer.

So melancholy were the lists of candidates at the half yearly admissions, that the public began to see the extent of a malady till then almost un-

known. In some families the whole number of children were deaf and dumb, in others *half* were thus afflicted; cases were numerous of five out of six, and it was ascertained that in twenty families, containing one hundred and fifty-five children, there were no fewer than seventy-eight deaf and dumb.

Eight years had scarcely elapsed, before the infant Institution was recognised as a great national charity; legacies, generous private contributions, subscriptions, all marked the support of a Christian and generous people; yet, such was the increased number of applicants, that it was believed an imperative duty to make further exertions, and the residence then occupied being too small, vigorous efforts were made by the committee to raise a fund for erecting a larger and more commodious building, leaving the annual supplies untouched. Mr. Townsend and Mr. Mason preached several collection sermons at this period, in London and its neighbourhood, but the latter did not live to see the noble work begun, as he was called to his reward in the prime of life, and in the midst of his usefulness, in February 1804. He was the firm friend and ardent advocate of this interesting charity, and still lives in the recollection of the earliest friends of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum.

July 11, 1807, the first stone of the new Asylum was laid by his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester. The ceremony was attended by some of the nobility, and a numerous concourse of people.

On the first stone was the following inscription:—

A SOCIETY
TO PROVIDE EDUCATION FOR THE
DEAF AND DUMB
CHILDREN OF INDIGENT PARENTS,
WAS FIRST PROJECTED AND ESTABLISHED
IN LONDON, A.D. 1792, BY
THE REV. JOHN TOWNSEND
AND
THE REV. HENRY COX MASON.
AND
THIS FIRST STONE
OF A NEW ASYLUM,
BUILT BY VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS,
WAS LAID
ON THE 11TH OF JULY, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1807,
AND THE 47TH OF THE REIGN OF
KING GEORGE III.,
BY HIS MAJESTY'S NEPHEW,
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE WILLIAM,
DUKE OF GLOUCESTER,

As soon as the Duke had placed the stone, the Rev. Dr. Yates, of Chelsea College, the secretary, read a suitable and devotional prayer, for a divine blessing to rest upon the Institution, and upon all those who were engaged in this work of faith and labour of love. Mr. Townsend then addressed the vast multitude assembled on the occasion. At first he was much agitated, but soon became more composed, and delivered a speech, the substance of which is comprised in the following words.

"Previous to the introduction of moral evil, man was not only a holy and happy being, but he was exempt from disease and imperfections. The

introduction of sin has not only poisoned or dried up all the springs of mental delight, but it has entailed on the inhabitants of this lower world an innumerable multitude of bodily diseases, which carry in their train excruciating pain, distressing debility, and hideous deformities,—diseases, many of which exclude the subjects of them from that sweet and social intercourse which is the balm of human life." He then argued the necessity of such institutions as the Deaf and Dumb Asylum; and concluded with an urgent appeal on its behalf.

A new era was commenced for our Institution. No longer *struggling* into notice, it received the patronage of the noble and the rich. The Duke of Gloucester was its avowed Patron, and the Marquis of Buckingham, its President. His Royal Highness has since shown the most ardent and persevering zeal; always presiding at its anniversaries, and in every way endeavouring to promote its success.

If friends increased, so did the mute supplicants for admission, and it became evident to the committee, that there must be active and energetic exertions to procure still further supplies. The new building, originally constructed for the reception of 150 children, was enlarged to receive 180, and subsequently 200, and many generous minds felt with the illustrious patron, who said, "That it ought to know no limit until every supplicating object in the United Kingdom could participate in the blessings conferred by so truly christian an Institution."

In the course of the summer of 1807, Mr. Townsend went to Bristol, and whilst there, determined to collect something for the object so dear to his heart, or, as he sometimes styled it, "His darling child." He therefore preached at the Rev. S. Lowell's, where he collected 44*l.*, and before his return to London, obtained several subscriptions and donations. This success suggested to him the idea of travelling; and having laid a plan before the committee, they assented to the printing of a circular letter, which was to be addressed to the nobility, gentry, and other benevolent individuals, soliciting subscriptions and donations. The wisdom of this project was ultimately proved.

In the summer of 1808, he went into the west. The result of the journey appears to have been highly gratifying, as the collections and subscriptions amounted to a much larger sum than he had anticipated. At Fareham, a lady was so powerfully impressed with the interesting nature of the object pleaded for by the minister, that she left her trinkets in the plate.

At this place he was introduced to a family of eight children, five of whom were deaf and dumb. Some of them were nearly twenty years of age, and had received no instruction. At Southampton, a little girl was brought to him who had been at the Asylum, and had there received every advantage proposed. At Rumsey, a company of performers postponed the play advertised for the evening, when they heard of the intended sermon for the deaf and dumb. It was said, that some

of the party were there, and contributed to the collection.

The extent of this journey was to Exeter, and such was his anxiety to secure every pulpit, that he frequently travelled all night. The Earl of Cork having heard of the sermon he had preached at Frome, requested to see him the following morning. Mr. T. was much pleased with his Lordship, who has ever since been a steady friend to the Institution, and the pastor's frugal table was frequently graced with some of the winged and four footed tribes, which had roamed in the lovely park at Marston.

On his return from this tour, Mr. Townsend writes thus in his journal:—"I desire to feel much gratitude to the Great Benefactor of mankind, who has preserved me whilst travelling many hundred miles, and hope that, through his blessing, the many sermons I have preached will be remembered in the last day. On entering upon this journey for the deaf and dumb, I determined to make them subservient to the edification and salvation of those, who might be attracted to hear by the novelty of the subject. To effect this, my texts have been such as enabled me to exhibit a full and explicit representation of the excellency, the glory and the suitableness of Christ, who came to deliver us from moral disease and misery; from thence deducing the natural conclusion, that, as Christ compassionated our miserable condition, we ought to sympathise with, and help those who were in the unfortunate and distressing circumstances of the children for whom I was appointed to plead."

In April 1809, he went into Essex, where he was again very successful, and, in the summer of the same year, he travelled through the eastern counties. At Bury St Edmunds, he met with Mr. M'Kenzie, the rector of Thetford, who not only became an ardent friend to the Institution, but interested the Bishop of Norwich in the same cause. In his own parish the worthy rector procured many annual subscriptions and donations, and obtained the use of the Wesleyan chapel for Mr. Townsend, who remembered till death the personal kindness and attention shown to him at the rectory. The latter being obliged to resume his journey at four o'clock in the morning, his kind host rose at that early hour to testify his respect and esteem.

On alighting at the inn at Norwich, an interesting youth fixed his eyes most intently on him, and, waiting for some time, at length followed him to the house where he was to lodge. On the following day the young man was introduced, and found to be one of those who had been at the Asylum. He was apprentice to a statuary, who spoke highly of his talents and character.

On this tour, he collected in one day, as the proceeds of three sermons at different towns, the sum of 150*l.*, besides obtaining annual subscriptions and donations.

In October 1809, he made a short tour into Kent, when he preached several sermons, and by these, and life and annual subscriptions, obtained nearly 600*l.*

There still being a debt on the building fund, Mr. Townsend made another tour to assist the liquidation in 1810. It appears that, in this and the two preceding years, he was the instrument of adding no less a sum than 6000*l.* to the funds of the Society.*

The committee of the Institution for which he travelled, were not insensible to his exertions, and a letter expressive of their approbation, was transmitted to him by the secretary.

But, gratifying as this might be, higher sources of delight awaited him, as he lived to see "this darling child" become the parent of many fair daughters. The combination of effort, system and perseverance that had marked her progress, had instigated many benevolent minds to similar exertion in England, Scotland and Ireland. The latter country, Mr. T. visited in the year 1822, and there learnt that three thousand children were afflicted with this malady in the Sister Kingdom.

A pamphlet, published anonymously, greatly assisted at this period, to give that increased impulse of exertion, to which Ireland owes the prosperity of her rising Institution. The following

* When Her Majesty Queen Charlotte, and the Princess Elizabeth came to see the Asylum, the Duke of Gloucester introduced Mr. T. as the Founder of the Charity, when her Majesty said,—"I am glad to see you Mr. Townsend, it must be a great satisfaction to you to see so many children made happy." The Princess said, "I have often heard of you Mr. Townsend, and I am very glad to see you to-day." The Queen presented the Institution, with fifty guineas, and the Princess Elizabeth, with twenty.

quotation marks the fervour which characterised the writer. "The total want of all knowledge would, if there were nothing more, be in itself an incalculable evil. For a reasoning being to be deprived of all the materials with which to exercise reason—for a social being to be deprived of all the consolations of social intercourse; this alone would be a state of privation, calculated to call forth in his behalf the warmest sympathies of benevolence. And none can surely comprehend better than the intelligent and the kind-hearted, how lonely, how cheerless, how desolate the lot—what a wilderness of faces, and solitude of hearts, must this world be, to a deaf-mute *uneducated.* But there is another and a more serious privation. A being endowed with an immortal soul, a responsible creature, is living without God in the world. To him the sacred book of Revelation is opened in vain; to him the restraints and the consolations of religion are equally unknown. His heart was never humbled by a sense of its own corrupt nature; never was lifted up in gratitude to a merciful Redeemer; never communed in prayer with the searcher of all hearts, the sole fountain of purification—but he stalks upon the earth, with the port indeed and external appearance of man, deprived of every thing essential to him as a moral agent—alike ignorant of his nature, his destiny, and his God. Precluded as he is in this state, however, from the knowledge of what is good, he is unfortunately not equally protected against the admission of evil. If he is excluded from the intellectual world, the material

world is still open to his view, and exerts all its pernicious influence over his senses. His mind does not remain, like a sheet of white paper, upon which nothing has been written; the passions have scrawled upon it their grim and frightful characters; in that wide moral waste where no seed has been sown, no fruit ripens:—the barren bramble and the deadly night-shade flourish there in rank luxuriance, and the serpent reigns uncontrolled in the dominions of the dove. Hence it is, that low and sordid vices usurp the place of sublime and noble virtues; that cunning is substituted for wisdom; and that the faculties act with a perverted force in proportion as their range is limited. Such is the state from which we are called upon to rescue these unfortunates, and to become the humble instruments, under God, of substituting industry, morals, and religion, for idleness, depravity, and vice."

When St. Augustine wrote, the learned believed that those born deaf and dumb, could never be led to a knowledge and belief of that which was contained in Revelation. The following answers to questions proposed, with the anecdote given, would have astonished and delighted this Father of the christian Church.

Q. What book is that?

A. The holy Bible.

Q. Why do you call that book the Holy Bible?

A. Because it was written by divine inspiration.

Q. Why do you call God "our Father?"

A. Because He made us, preserves us, and gives us all good things.

Q. Who is in Heaven?

A. In Heaven, there are Jesus Christ, holy angels, and the souls of good men.

Q. Why are you deaf and dumb, and other people not?

A. Because it pleases God.

A child from Ashford in Kent, about a twelvemonth after she had left the Asylum, was seized with a disease which proved fatal. During the last stage of her illness, her father was sitting by her bed, with a book which he held in his hand. She wrote on a slate, I shall soon die, then taking the book, pointed to several verses, repeating many times, the word *good*, clearly intimating her approbation of them, as expressive of pleasing emotions, founded on Christian expectation of a future state.

A heathen poet thought that:—

> "To instruct the deaf, no art could ever reach,
> No care improve them, and no wisdom teach."

It is now, however, proved that those afflicted objects of our sympathy, are not only capable of being taught, but of conveying instruction to others. The writer of the following letter is an assistant in that Asylum, where he was formerly a pupil:

TO DOCTOR WATSON.

'*Asylum, Kent-road, April* 10.

'Sir,—Last Monday we went to the city of London Tavern, to attend the anniversary dinner. It was a circumstance of great regret among the friends of this Institution, that His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester was unable to take the chair on account of severe indisposition, and Sir C. Stephen Hunter, Bart. was

invited to take it, in the absence of the valuable patron. The Duke is a great friend to this Institution, and has, for sixteen years past, been so kind as to attend the anniversary dinner regularly. I suppose there were upwards of one hundred gentlemen sat down to dinner, and that the collection made was 600*l.* but I have not been told the exact number nor amount. Several of the scholars were introduced to the company, after dinner, to whom they showed their writing, cyphering, and exercise books, and answered such questions as were put to them, both by writing and speaking. Afterwards three of them recited verses to the company, who seemed much pleased, and to understand them perfectly, for I observed that they applauded very much when the last speaker concluded. When I was a pupil, I remember to have recited verses to large companies, on similar occasions, and to have been much pleased when they gave me applause. I feel much gratitude and delight when I see a meeting of the friends and supporters of the asylum, because I experience the advantages I myself have derived from their benevolence, and rejoice to see them extending it to others labouring under the same misfortune as I did, when admitted a pupil in 1803.

'I am, Sir,

'Your faithful assistant and grateful pupil,

'JOHN HAMILTON.'"

That the deaf and dumb are not incapable of the pleasures of taste, is proved by some of them becoming distinguished artists. The plate in the frontispiece is engraved by one, to whom the name of Townsend ever will be dear.

At the period when the subject of this memoir was called to his final reward, the number resident in the Asylum, was two hundred and twenty, and the amount of admissions had been nearly nine hundred.

If, as a philanthropist, he could rejoice in having been the primary mover of an establishment, which has raised so many forlorn, and helpless, and suffering beings, to feel a communion of interests, a participation of enjoyments, a power of

becoming useful citizens—what must have been his delight as a christian, on seeing their spiritual faculties developed, by a knowledge of that holy book, which tells them of sins pardoned by a Mediator's sacrifice, of affections purified by the Spirit's influences, and of those enjoyments of a higher existence, which *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.*

CHAPTER V.

Formation of the London Missionary Society, &c.

We are now entering on a new era of the christian world; the servants of a common Master began to feel that *principles* were more valuable, than *systems* and *forms* of *worship*. Churchman and dissenter, laid aside the animosities which had so long existed in opposition to every precept of Him, whom they mutually addressed as "Our Father."

The year 1793, witnessed an union, which proved the germ of that fruit, which has since refreshed our own, as well as heathen lands. A catholic spirit was evidenced in the meeting of twenty-four ministers belonging to different parties, to establish a periodical work on a plan, which was intended to meet the approbation of orthodox members of the established Church, as well as that of orthodox Dissenters. Mr. Townsend was one of this number, and, ever ready with his pen, as with personal exertions, to promote the cause of God, was an early contributor of essays, anecdotes, memoirs, obituaries, and sometimes of poetry. This periodical was the Evangelical Magazine. The profits were to be distributed among widows of deceased ministers, and for other charitable purposes, and 16,000*l.* have been thus applied.

Referring to this journal some years afterwards, Mr. Townsend remarks, "Notwithstanding the contempt of some, and the opposition of others, it has been the instrument of incalculable good. It should ever be remembered that it was intended by its founders as a miscellaneous collection of good and useful things, some of greater and some of lesser importance; but all calculated to serve as a vehicle of religious information, and by their combined influence, to become powerful engines for the promotion of the general interests of religion; and I doubt not that the work will continue to be so, when the heads of all those who originally promoted its interests, shall have been laid in the silent grave."

The forcible and inspiring letters of Melville Horne on Missions, which appeared in 1794, produced a strong effect on the mind of Mr. T., who felt "powerfully stimulated to desire that some measure might be adopted to procure a simultaneous movement of British Christians in this honourable service." *Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,* seemed felt in its fullest import; and therefore, when Dr. Bogue met with the subject of our present memoir, he found an ardent co-operator in his missionary plans. The former invited him to meet a few ministers at Baker's Coffee House, November 5, 1794, to consult measures for the formation of a Missionary Society, to be composed of episcopalians and nonconformists. Those present were the Rev. Dr. Bogue, Rev. M. Wilks, Rev. John Eyre, Rev. J. Stevens, Rev.

J. Love, Rev. J. Reynolds, Rev. J. Brooksbank, and the Rev. J. Townsend. The principle of the Society was agreed upon, and it was resolved to invite the co-operation of the country ministers and churches, by inserting an outline of its plans in the Evangelical Magazine. It was proposed to have meetings for prayer, and for reading such portions of Scripture as related to the spread of the Gospel; that they might stir up their mutual faith and zeal in the promotion of an undertaking so grand and benevolent.

In the discussions that took place on the nature and extent of its operations, Mr. Townsend wished that France and other countries under the dominion of the Papal See, should partake of the intended benefits. This proposal was overruled, and the Society confined itself to send Missions to the heathen only.

This rising Society meeting with much opposition from both churchmen and dissenters, he remarks, "Time and truth will ultimately raise a suitable and lasting monument, which shall tell the world and the churches of Christ in ages to come, what extended, what wonderful events the great Head of the Church was pleased to accomplish by the instrumentality of this despised, reproached and persecuted Society."

When almost universal consternation spread amongst the friends of missions, by the capture of the ship Duff, Mr. T. proved himself to be one of those, who estimated missionary operations as involving a solemn and imperious duty. The firmness of his mind, and the high tone of his

Christian principles, induced increasing ardour and more determined zeal; he, therefore, immediately preached a sermon, from the words of Jehovah to Moses,—*Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward.* This produced the desired effect, as it not only gave new courage to the timid and doubtful, but so impressed the minds of those who heard, that large and generous donations were presented to Mr. T., before he left the chapels where he had officiated.

On the first Sabbath in 1797, Mr. Townsend preached three sermons to the old, the middle-aged, and the young. The request was universal, that they might be printed; this was complied with, and 1000 copies were sold immediately. In the following year were published the sermons on prayer. A passage selected from the preface will explain the circumstances which gave birth to this volume. "These very plain discourses, upon one of the most important branches of religion, derive their origin from a social conversation which took place upon the subject, at the author's fire-side. Fully to answer the inquiries of some of his family, and, if possible, to aid them in the devotional exercise of prayer, he determined to preach two or three sermons upon the subject. As he proceeded in his design, he perceived it admitted, and was truly worthy, of a more extensive discussion than he at first designed to give it; and he was insensibly led from one branch to another, till he had preached eight sermons; when, fearing that by further enlargement he should rather fatigue and weary, than

edify and instruct, he determined to conclude them with a sermon upon the prevalence of Christ's intercession for his praying people." These discourses were published by subscription, and the many testimonies he received of their usefulness, inspired him with gratitude to that God, who chooses in his sovereignty *the foolish things of the world to confound the wise,* and *the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.*

In 1799, he engaged in a work, which, though it gave him much anxiety and fatigue, and stole many a midnight hour from sleep, was productive of much pleasure and improvement, as it constrained him to read the Sacred Volume with a closer attention than formerly, and impressed many of its minuter parts more deeply on his memory; while at the same time it imparted more correct views of its connexion and spirit.

The following statement is given by Mr. Townsend. "Mr. Mason and myself had, from our union in the interests of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, formed a great intimacy, and frequently visited each other. On one occasion, he told me he had received a proposal from a bookseller to furnish some short notes for a new quarto Bible, to which he had replied that he was too little accustomed to this kind of work to venture upon it by himself; but that he had a friend, who, he thought, might be induced to join in such an undertaking, and that he would cheerfully communicate the proposal to him. I was the friend to whom he referred; and, consenting to write

with him, it was agreed between us that I should select the passage for annotation, compose the outline of thought upon it, and then send it to him for correction, addition, or abridgment, with this proviso, that nothing was ultimately to appear which did not accord with my known sentiments. Before the work actually commenced, the bookseller suggested that it would be best to have but one name; and, as Mr. Mason was a clergyman, his was supposed to have the most weight. I felt at first some scruples about it, but my friend having no objection, I complied. If the notes have nothing to call forth much praise, there is nothing in them injurious. They are plain and scriptural, and some have read them with pleasure—perhaps profit."

It was in May 1799, that at a general meeting of the London Missionary Society, some of its members formed the plan of the Religious Tract Society. Mr. T. had no immediate share in its formation, but he soon fell into the ranks of its supporters, and was introduced into the committee. He assisted in reading and preparing tracts for publication, and several were written by himself, amongst which were the following: "Scripture Extracts, Parental Duties, Filial Duties, To the Aged, On Late Attendance at Public Worship, Important Questions." Various interesting anecdotes might be given connected with the above tracts, which have been translated into all the European languages; but Mr. Townsend has recorded his *gratitude* for the astonishing success of "Scripture Extracts." Of this useful tract, four thousand

were circulated in Ireland, and it has been translated into Bengalee, Hindostanee, Sanscrit, &c. &c. It was particularly selected by an English officer in the Spanish service, who had witnessed its utility, and ordered a large number to be sent to Malaga. A minister in the Highlands of Scotland writes, "The 'Scripture Extracts,' I gave to the children of the Sabbath-schools in this neighbourhood, and a portion of them became their weekly task, so that in about three months every child that received a tract, could repeat the whole of it."

When Mr. Townsend's health gradually declined, and he could no longer attend the committee, he wrote and published the following: "Good and Bad Servants, Good and Bad Masters and Mistresses, A Dialogue between a Manager of a School and the Mother of one of the Scholars, An Admonition to those who live in the habitual neglect of the Lord's Supper, A New Year's Gift, An Address to Lying-in Women." Some of these will be found in the Evangelical Magazine, written in the form of essays or letters: he wrote also an address to the Jews, of which some hundreds were distributed among that people.

In 1800, Mr. Townsend went for six weeks to Edinburgh. The party-spirit that prevailed in Scotland, "caused no small regret to a man who was willing to make every *lawful* sacrifice to prevent unholy contentions and jealousies."

In 1801, Dr. Horsley, the Bishop of Rochester, in a charge to the clergy of his diocese, violently attacked Sunday-schools and itinerant preaching.

The former, his lordship said, were "schools of atheism and disloyalty; that the children were there taught to despise religion, the laws and all subordination." Mr. Townsend, who felt the amazing difference between himself and the mental powers and literary accomplishments of Dr. Horsley, still thought it a duty to reply to accusations, founded on error and prejudice. It had become fashionable to declaim loudly against French philosophers, English sectarianism and Sunday-schools. With the *former*, the dissenting minister was inclined to wage a warfare, equally persevering as the Bishop; but, being intimately acquainted with the two *proscribed* modes of religious instruction, he could not be silent, whilst they were so aspersed. Many of the schools he patronised, and knew they were conducted by prudent, peaceable and religious persons, possessing the fairest characters and the soundest principles, both *political* and *christian*. They might be dissenters, but "truth, especially religious truth, may be conveyed by different channels, and by persons between whom, there are a thousand shades of difference in those things which are neither essential to our being real Christians, or to our obtaining eternal glory."

Mr. Townsend assures the Bishop that the books used are, "Brown's Catechism," and "Dr. Watts's Divine Songs for Children;" that these contain all the "atheism and sedition taught in dissenting schools. The doctrines inculcated are those of 'the Articles, Prayers and Homilies of the Established Church,' teaching the total de-

pravity and sinfulness of human nature, pardon and redemption by the obedience and death of Christ, and the vast importance of sanctification and holiness, together with the necessary assistance of the Holy Spirit, to enlighten, renew, and comfort the soul. Here also is taught the whole range of christian and moral duties, especially those which respect superiors, inferiors, and equals."

In 1800, the Sunday-school Society had distributed 31,398 Testaments, and 6244 Bibles. This alone was a guarantee for the instruction of 156,826 children, and might prove that the attempt made to produce moral reformation, was based upon religious principle.

In pleading the cause of itinerant preaching, Mr. Townsend does not attempt to justify those who, destitute of character and prudence as of talent, "disgrace that scriptural line of service;" but he became the advocate of those who, actuated by the highest motives, sought neither affluence nor ease, who *believed*, *loved*, and *preached* the doctrinal part of that creed, to which his lordship had subscribed.. Mr. T. reasons as follows: "It is thought no disgrace in a judge to travel from place to place to administer justice, nor for a philosopher to navigate dangerous seas, and explore distant and inhospitable climes, to collect new and curious plants and fossils: why then should we treat with contempt the man who, feeling the worth of immortal souls, and fired with love to the Redeemer who died to save him, aspires to the honour of making known the

glory of His name,—the power and virtue of His atonement,—and the "unsearchable riches of His grace."

In every age of the christian Church, there have been itinerant preachers,—and our own Bishop Latimer set the example to his clergy, as one writer, speaking of him says, "Old Latimer, in a coarse frieze gown, trudged afoot; his Testament hanging at one end of his leathern girdle, and his spectacles at the other, and, without ceremony, instructed people in a rustic style from a hollow tree."

Mr. Townsend concluded his address to Dr. Horsley, by asserting, that such a charge as his Lordship's must have a pernicious tendency, as "atheism and infidelity are common enemies to truth and righteousness, and have always derived more advantage from the divisions and contentions among Christians, than from any wisdom or strength of their own. This is demonstrated by the history of ages: draw then, from this fact, my Lord, an argument of forbearance towards every class of dissenters, and especially those who believe and preach the doctrines which your clergy subscribe."

"Finally, my Lord; let me assure you, that the numerous and ardent friends of these Institutions, are neither discouraged nor inflamed by the cruel and unjust things, of which their adversaries have accused them. They are as ready as they are able to prove their own innocence, whenever and wherever they have opportunity; and, if they are neither heard nor justified at the bar of public opi-

nion upon earth, they rejoice that shortly they shall appear, together with their enemies, before the bar of God. The Prince and the Peasant,—the Bishop and the Itinerant,—the Accuser and the Accused,—shall there be heard, and a righteous award will be given. O may our thoughts, our words, and our actions, be regulated by this solemn consideration! May it correct our prejudices, calm our passions, and inspire us with religious and moral fidelity; and, when we have passed beyond the reach of those infirmities and mistakes to which we are now liable, may each of us be found in the 'wedding garment,' and hear the Master say, *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* Matt. xxv. 21."

In the commencement of 1802, Mr. Townsend had a dangerous illness, which so alarmed his friends, that, on his recovery, they made an united and efficient effort, to provide a permanent addition to his income; as they believed pulpit and other exertions had induced the malady. In this year, the Friendly Female Society was instituted, the object of which was to relieve poor, infirm, and aged women of good character. Mr. T. was one of its earliest supporters, and subsequently became an active trustee.

The year 1804 was marked by the origination of that Society, which, from a small and humble commencement, was destined to include within its ranks the most revered of our Bishops, the most honoured of our nobility, the most distinguished of our philanthropists. The seed

planted has sprung up to a mighty tree, which has overshadowed the earth, and whose leaves are *for the healing of the nations.* What may not the Bible Society have done for the nineteenth century? a century marked by more discoveries in Sciences and the Arts, than any former period. May not the impetus given in every department of natural and experimental philosophy, be greatly owing to a development of faculties which may have originated in a more extended knowledge of the Bible? But if this be not the case, the beautiful exhibition of union among Christians, who then began to obey the long forgotten command of their Master to "love one another"—this alone would have marked its divine origin. That effects so heavenly were produced, is evident. Men were seen, who, merging all distinctions of names and sects, in a holy wish to act in the spirit and letter of the New Testament, first founded this benign Institution, and when it became identified with the rich and noble, retired to humbler posts of labour.* Among this honoured band was John Townsend.

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* "Those who prepared the original draught of this Institution, avoided every thing which could be construed into an exhibition of themselves, and an assertion of that influence to which they might have advanced unquestionable pretensions. Resigning the foreground of the Society to those whom they thought most likely to advance its general interests, they contentedly occupied less conspicuous stations; and seemed to think themselves sufficiently honoured by the privilege of labouring in its service, and recompensed by the satisfaction of witnessing its success."

Owen's *History of the Bible Society.*

As one of the committee of the Tract Society,* he was present when the Rev. Mr. Charles, of Bala, made application for Welsh Testaments to supply the wants of the Principality. Discussion on this request, elicited the fact, that many parts of England were destitute of the Bible. Mr. Hughes then proposed an address to the public, requesting aid in the general dispersion of the Scriptures. This receiving unanimous assent, a circular address was issued, with the following title: —"The importance of a further distribution of Bibles."

It being proved that societies already in existence were insufficient to supply the demand for Bibles, the excellent and venerable Bishops of London and Durham sanctioned the infant Institution, whose comprehensive provisions embraced all classes of Christians. The churchman and the dissenter who loved the Bible as the

* This committee were accustomed to hold their meetings at Mr. Hardcastle's counting-house. In a note prefixed to the address delivered at Mr. H's interment, Mr. Townsend writes: —"I scarcely ever pass over London Bridge, without glancing my eyes towards those highly-favoured rooms appertaining to our departed friend, and feeling a glow of pleasure at the recollection, that there the *London Missionary Society*, the *Religious Tract Society*, the *Hibernian Society*, &c. formed those plans of Christian benevolenee on which Divine Providence has so signally smiled. This pleasure is greatly heightened, when I also recollect, that in those favoured rooms was brought forth that gigantic agent of moral and spiritual good—the *British and Foreign Bible Society*. These rooms, in my judgment, are second to none but that in which the Disciples met after their Master's ascension, and from whence they went forth to enlighten and to bless a dark and guilty world."

foundation of their faith and hope, united to give a more general circulation to that Book, which is the fountain of knowledge, and the gift of Him, from whom proceeds all that is good and perfect.

From his constant attendance in the committee, and his activity in the formation of several Auxiliary Societies, Mr. Townsend was made an honorary life member.

Being very anxious that an Auxiliary Bible Society should be formed in Westminster, he pointed out the duty of such an effort to an individual resident there, who afterwards, acting on his suggestions, interested those in its favour, who gave form and consistency to the object. The first public meeting was held in Willis's Rooms, on the 17th of December, 1812, when Mr. Townsend spoke as follows:

"In rising to address this large and respectable assembly, I feel myself oppressed by a great contrariety of feelings. I recollect that I am surrounded by peers of the realm—by those whose thundering eloquence has made the Commons House of Parliament even ring with admiration and applause; I recollect the pleasing and interesting manner in which these honourable persons have held forth entertainment and instruction to this assembly, and feel anxious in rising to address you after them, because what they have offered to your acceptance at this mental feast, they have presented in golden cups, embossed and enamelled with the finest tints of human eloquence. But on the other hand, I am relieved and comforted with the thought that

those plain men who cannot enchant by eloquent or fine and sublime figures of allusion, may be equally zealous in the cause, and as anxious and successful in their endeavours to promote and extend it.

"I have the privilege of saying, that I was one of those who stood among the small circle that witnessed the opening of the spring head of this Institution, but it yielded only drops; we all felt anxiety lest it should never become a stream, but lo! it has become a broad, a deep, and a rapid river; it not only rolls on with majestic force, but is divided into a thousand, yea, into ten thousand rivulets, of which it may be truly said, *the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly; and rejoice even with joy and singing.* But great as is its prosperity, yet it must not be expected that it will meet with no resistance. I hold in my hand a translation of an edict of the Emperor of China, aiming to interdict the introduction of that sacred Volume into his dominions, and making the penalty of such an attempt, no less than death itself. How vast the contrast between the policy and the judgment of those who there stand at the head of empire, and of those wise and enlightened men whom we behold assembled among us to day, to befriend the world by the diffusion of sacred light.

"My worthy friend who sits near me, (and I feel honour and pleasure in being permitted to call him so,) you will know him best as the

LIBERATOR OF AFRICA—he has, with great elegance and propriety, compared the circulation of the sacred Scriptures to the diffusion of light. And is there that emperor in the world who shall lift up his hand before the rising sun, and say, 'thy light shall not extend over my dominions?' It may be so, but it is not possible that such opposition should succeed. The *star* has already arisen in the east, and not long hence, peradventure, the *sun* of righteousness shall arise in all its meridian glory. I do not possess, and I would not profess to have, the least particle of the spirit of prophecy; yet I do not hesitate to say, I cherish the hope that the time will come, when the sacred Scriptures shall not only penetrate into the empire of China, but also when Pekin itself, the capital of that vast and populous empire, shall have a Bible Society, and some future emperor become its patron. I do not speak merely upon hypothesis, I reason from facts.

"It is well known that the late Frederick the Great was an enemy to divine Revelation. His infidel principles were fed and nourished by Voltaire, the most artful and vehement of the enemies of Christianity, and they cherished the fond delusion, that the Holy Scriptures would sink and go into oblivion, and that the visions of their corrupt minds, would outlive the volume of Revelation. But what is the state of the question? Berlin has now its Bible Society, and the patron of that Bible Society, is the successor of that very Frederick, who treated the Bible with such contempt. I argue then from this fact, that if, in that very ca-

pital where infidelity was publicly avowed by its monarch, the Bible has not only maintained its ground, but also that a Bible Society has been formed, and the ruler of that kingdom has become the patron of it—we may hope that ourselves or our descendants will witness the same in China, or any other part of the world, which may at present show hostility to it: surely the work is of God, and it shall proceed. I have been often struck with a circumstance that occurs in the sacred pages, that, while the emperors at Rome were forming edicts to suppress the Scriptures of divine truth, and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, Paul, a prisoner in that city, writing to the Christians at Philippi, has this remark: *All the Saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household.* The Bible then had penetrated with all its saving light, into that very palace where the edicts were formed to suppress it.

"We have heard lately of the great nation; but has it been ascertained what is the legitimate criterion of a great nation? Is it the extent of its commercial relations, or the fidelity with which its mercantile engagements are executed? Is it the extent and depth of its scientific researches? Is it that its civil and religious liberties rest upon a broad and deep foundation? Is it the courage and fortitude of the defenders of that nation by land and sea? If any one of these *were* the criterion, my native country has nothing to fear from a comparison with any nation under heaven. But I dispute the premises; these are not the criteria of a great nation; it is my fixed and decided

opinion, that a great nation is that, which concentrates within its own bosom the most energetic principles, and the largest measure of moral, social, and religious good; and which, from the abundance of its good-will toward man, is aiming to carry the same blessings to the very ends of the earth. If *this* is the criterion of a great nation, we this day witness that it eminently applies to our own country. We possess the Bible, the very fountain of moral, social, and religious good, but we are unwilling to possess it alone, we would send it to every nation of the world—nay, I am happy this day in recognising the fact, that we are fulfilling the instructions of the Book itself, which says, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; if he is naked, clothe him. We *have* done all this in its literal construction, but we are aiming to do it this day in a spiritual sense; to give our enemies the bread of life, which cometh down from heaven —to clothe their minds with the garments of salvation, and to send them those spiritual waters, which not only allay their thirst, but which shall give life and health to their souls. It has been, and is still, the desire of this Society, to extend its beneficial effects to all the prisoners of war amongst us, and they are reaping the benefit: at the very moment that we are struggling for our existence as a nation, we are willing to impart, even to those who have lifted up their hand against us, the blessings we ourselves enjoy."

Mr. Townsend in his ministerial capacity, generally noticed from the pulpit any national event

which much attracted public attention. This was the case on occasion of the funeral of Lord Nelson, when he preached a sermon, which was never designed for publication; but on his friends requesting it, he readily complied with their wish.

The following is a brief extract from this discourse. "If an ordinary funeral speaks to the eye, and to the hearts of the spectators, how much more weighty—how much more instructive is the funeral of such a man as Nelson!—A man who, by the smiles of Providence on his professional skill and activity, had risen out of comparative obscurity and indigence, to the proud enjoyment of riches, and honours, and fame—and who, if he had survived the action in which he so honourably fell, would have reaped a more extended, and a more splendid, proportion of all those rewards of valour, which are so fascinating to the eyes of the men of the world. To see such a man just on the eve of concluding a long career of splendid exploits—just on the point of returning to his family and country, loaded with riches and honours, yea admired, and praised, and loved almost to idolatry; to see, I say, such a successful warrior carried a lifeless, a mangled, an emaciated corpse to the tomb, what an humbling—what a mortifying lesson! How could one recollect this last point, and carefully notice the proofs and emblems of mortality on the one hand, and then observe the pomp and splendour which were intermingled with these on the other, and not be struck with the vanity, with the uncertainty of all human expectations, and all worldly glory?

"What a rich source of solid instruction was here opened, especially to the princes, nobility, and gentry of every description, who attended, or beheld the mournful procession! It was even told them, who are so accustomed to forget death themselves, and to have it carefully kept out of their sight—it was loudly enforced even upon them—that though rich and great, they were mortal—that they must quit their spacious and splendid mansions—that they must lay aside all their state and glory, and, like Nelson, go *to the house appointed for all living.*

> ——————'All ends in—"Here he lies!"
> And "dust to dust," concludes the noblest song.'"

On the first of January, 1807, the London Female Penitentiary was founded. To this Institution he became a decided friend and warm advocate. Many facts coming to his knowledge of the demoralized state of the metropolis, he published a letter to the Bishop of London, entreating his Lordship's attention to the state of the public and populous streets of London, where scenes of unblushing vice were exhibited that would disgrace a continental city. "A moral disease," he remarks, "a disease of the most infectious nature and malignant complexion, exists in the very heart of the body politic, and is making such rapid progress, as threatens nothing less than the destruction of the vital purity and strength of the country; ruining for both worlds an immense multitude of our citizens, especially of the rising generation. Yea, such is the gigantic aspect of this moral dis-

ease; such is the progress it has made, is making, and bids fair still to make, that unless some immediate, some effective measures, are vigorously applied, it threatens the contamination of all the springs of moral virtue; and in the proportion that it does this, it weakens and debilitates the general strength of the country.

"You are, my Lord, already far sunk into the vale of years; your course is nearly run; your labours are almost finished; but one more work of mercy towards the diocese of London may be still within your reach. Suffer me to entreat your Lordship to exert your influence, that every engine may be set in motion, to rescue its wealthy and populous city from the disgraceful and scandalous scenes which are every night exhibited in its streets. This desirable service will not be unaccceptable to Him, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity."

In the following year, Mr. Townsend preached a sermon, which entirely refutes the charge levelled at sectaries, that they preach faith as being all that is essential for salvation, and do not inculcate the necessity of good works, and of that spirit of love, which must be united to form the character of a true Christian. The occasion that called for this sermon, was the public recognition of Mr. Chapman, as pastor of the chapel at Greenwich.

That there *is* a class of men, who, calling themselves Christians, act and preach in direct opposition to the precepts of the moral law, and the gentle spirit of the new commandment given by our Saviour, dissenters regret equally with church-

men. Referring to such, Mr. T. says, "Let us examine not only the spirit which they cultivate, but their *conduct*, which may be considered as a fair and indisputable exposition of the nature and tendency of their principles. When examined by the Holy Scriptures, and the conduct practised by the Old and New Testament saints, it is evident that those persons who talk exclusively about grace, election, everlasting love, justification by Christ, and the assurance of eternal life, have not felt the powerful, the holy influence of those divine and heavenly truths, in which they affect to be better instructed, and to glory above all other men. I am persuaded, from the representation made of these truths in the Holy Scriptures, and from what I have felt of them upon my own heart, that in proportion as they are clearly understood, firmly believed, and powerfully experienced, in that proportion they will not only warm the heart with love and gratitude to God, and fill the mind with an habitual and ardent hatred to sin, but their influence and effect on all who know them by the Holy Spirit's teaching and power, will be a serious and devout observance of the Lord's Day, a regular and humble attendance upon religious ordinances, a tender and affectionate concern for the souls of their friends and relatives, and an humble and holy conduct before the world, lest the blessed name by which we are called should be evil spoken of.

"But wherein does the prosperity of Christian societies consist? Not in the great multitude of persons of which they are composed; for the most

numerous societies are sometimes the most corrupt, both in doctrine and practice. Not in their riches; for where these abound, there is sometimes a great conformity to the spirit and manners of the world. Not in the variety or greatness of knowledge and gifts. Few of the primitive churches equalled that of Corinth in these; but they were not of a sanctified kind, for their conduct was unholy, and they were so given up to internal contention and discord, and that about such unsuitable and trifling things, that the apostle could scarce tell whether he should reckon them spiritual or carnal persons. The prosperity of churches does not consist in the abundance of their liberality, or the ardour of their zeal; there must be something more spiritual, more substantial, and more abiding, to constitute real prosperity."

A Christian society prospers, when its members grow in sound and scriptural knowledge; not merely in an acquaintance with one or two leading points of doctrine, but of the whole truth as it is in Christ. That society is not likely really and effectually to prosper, which is not as thoroughly enlightened in the knowledge of the experimental and practical part of religion, as of the doctrinal. Indeed, spiritual knowledge is nothing, unless it powerfully influences the heart, and induces a life of holiness. Christian societies flourish, when the members of which they are constituted, abound in all the fruits of the Holy Spirit—when they consecrate their time, their wealth, their talents, their influence, to the glory of God,

and to the good of mankind. A Christian society should resemble a fountain in a desert and barren place; and channels should be opened in every direction, that its waters may go forth to heal and cleanse all around.

There can be neither prosperity nor peace in Christian communities, without the assistance and blessing of God. "Let us remember, says Mr. T., that Jesus has given his Holy Spirit to abide with the Church, and, by his operations, produce his own dove-like temper; yea, that he should mould the spirit of genuine Christians into the very mind of their blessed Redeemer, who has said, *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.* This Spirit not only new models the mind, but sheds abroad his heavenly fruit, which is *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, &c.*

Speaking of ministerial duties, Mr. Townsend remarks, "The ministry which is best calculated to advance peace and prosperity, is that which is faithful and discreet. Jesus said to his disciples, when he sent them forth to preach, *Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves,* Our responsibility is truly great—we speak in the name of our Master, and must give account of our ministry at the last day. Let us then take heed to the matter, the spirit, and the manner of it; let us see that we fulfil it. If we are *faithful* without *prudence,* we become impertinent, and fall into personalities; and if we are *prudent* and *discreet* without *faithfulness,* we fall under the influence of the fear of man, which bringeth a snare.

CHAP. VI.

Formation of the Congregational School.

EIGHTEEN years had elapsed from the first commencement of the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb; during which period, the benevolent subject of this memoir had, with few exceptions, been associated with all the societies, that had been formed for the religious and physical relief of suffering man. His ardour and energy, with the enlarged views which characterised him as a member of the universal Church, had placed him on most of the committees, where he was distinguished for an excellent judgment, united with singular mildness. Feeling all the value and importance of societies now in operation, there was one subject which had much occupied his thoughts, and interested his heart.

A dissenter upon principle—a dissenting minister enjoying competency, influence and respect, he thought long and deeply on the necessities of men, who, like himself, had their commission from heaven—men, who, by faithful preaching and holy conduct, were making many rich towards God.

Mr. Townsend contemplated with pain many churches which, like the rich Corinthians, allowed their ministers to labour, with little consideration

either of their temporal necessities or spiritual anxieties; remaining cold to, or careless of, their sufferings and wants, and, in the fulness of their own sufficiency, forgetting that a devoted christian minister takes for his motto, *Not yours but you.* Whilst Mr. Townsend saw rising around him institutions to meet every species of suffering to which our common nature is liable, he knew one class of men who, serving a spiritual Master, wished only to have temporal wants supplied, that their whole time and intellect might be devoted to His service, and that, disentangled from the low affairs of this life, their thoughts and affections might lead them to the high contemplations of another. To relieve the cares that oppressed such men—to provide for, and educate their children, and to secure an Asylum for their advanced age, he proposed to himself hopes which were never realized, and formed plans too mighty for his feeble resources to execute. That God who had given him the benevolent spirit of a Sutton, had denied him the affluence. The Charter House was the model he had in view, but the dissenting world were not inclined to follow so munificent a plan. It is indeed singular, that Christians living under the mild precepts of the New Testament, should forget the merciful provisions in the Old, for the Levite who ministered before the Lord in holy things. If the glory and beauty which attended the sons of Aaron are not to be the destiny of *our* more spiritual priesthood, surely we are not to inflict on them that moral martyrdom, which depressed circumstances must ever bring to

the upright and honourable mind. Dissenting ministers willingly take the humble station of *servants* to the church of Christ—they wish for neither the *certainty* nor the *perpetuity* that marks the established Church; but their devotedness and their zeal deserve a higher reward from their people, than a pittance grudgingly given, or withdrawn when the whitened locks of age mark the decay of the outward man, and of that intellect whose fire and energies were employed, with unwearied ardour and unabating zeal, for a period of thirty—nay perchance forty years. Was it not to prevent such evils, that the Apostle commanded that *those who minister in spiritual things should receive of temporal*? Unless he had believed that, in after ages of the Christian Church, this precept would be acted on, would he have given the *useless* advice to youthful pastors, *To be lovers of hospitality*. Tit. i. 8. *To be given to hospitality*. 1 Tim. iii. 2.

The following address to the ministers and laity of congregational dissenters, will show the nature and extent of Mr. Townsend's plans, as laid before the public.

"It has been allotted to us to live in a day in which the activity and zeal of our churches have been called forth with an energy, and to an extent never before witnessed. Who, that loves the souls of men, and sincerely desires to see the extension and establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom, can look back upon the few last years, and not rejoice in the highly beneficial efforts which have been used to disseminate the Bible, and enlighten

the heathen nations abroad, and also to promote Sunday Schools and Itinerant Preaching at home?

"The writer of this paper would most sincerely regret if he were to say or do any thing that should, in the smallest degree, tend to the injury of these truly important operations. It is, however, needful to be on our guard, that, whilst we are suitably occupied with these great objects, we do not forget other duties, which, though of much less magnitude, are in some measure connected with them; and in regard to which it may be said—These ought ye to have done, and not have left the other undone. While our ministers have taken a most active and liberal share in these works of faith and labours of love, and some even beyond their ability; it is evident to the writer, that something is needful to be done towards supplying their necessities and lightening their cares. Many of them have already spent, and others are cheerfully and laboriously spending, their time, their strength, and their talents, for the cause of God and the advantage of their fellow men, whilst the interests of their own families are not adequately provided for.

"The advocate of this new object has long had his eye and his heart fixed upon this work of mercy; but the time and labour required to nourish and bring to maturity his first and darling child have hitherto prevented. Providence having now accomplished that object far beyond his most sanguine expectation, he has determined, by the assistance of the Almighty, to devote all the time and strength which can be spared from other necessary and

important avocations, to the formation of an institution to be denominated the Congregational Asylum: to embrace, first, the educating and boarding (and clothing, if possible,) of eighty or one hundred children of ministers of the above denomination; and, secondly, to provide a comfortable retreat for ten or twelve aged ministers, worn out in the honourable and arduous service of the Christian sanctuary.

"In proportion as the exertions in favour of religion increase and prosper, and the churches of course are multiplied, the number of our public teachers must also increase; and it is a fact too well known, that the pecuniary circumstances of the generality of our ministers are such as to give them no surplus to lay by, to meet the peculiar necessities of old age, or decently educate their children.

"The children of dissenting ministers are shut out from all those schools which are under the influence of the Establishment. Is it not then much to be regretted, that as yet there has been no better provision made for them among their own denominations? As to dissenting ministers teaching their children themselves, that is impossible, owing to the multitude and variety of their avocations: and to provide them with suitable private schools is nearly as difficult, arising, in general, from the smallness of their incomes.

"Although the individual, who, in an humble dependance upon God, has taken upon himself the laborious task of raising and establishing this temple of mercy, and on whose exertions and

zeal it must materially depend, at least for some time, is a minister of that denomination for whose advantage it is formed; yet he feels great satistion in being able to say that Providence has placed him out of the reach of deriving any advantage from it himself, either now or in future: he is of course necessarily exonerated from even the suspicion of having any interested motive in devoting himself to this needful and important service.

"In making this appeal to the liberality of Christians, the writer thinks he may especially and most confidently reckon upon the zealous co-operation, not only of the ministers and officers of congregational societies, but he also hopes that the rich and affluent among the laity in general will show a prompt zeal, (as they have done upon so many other occasions,) not merely by their own individual subscriptions, but by endeavouring to influence all within their neighbourhood, to whom Providence has afforded the means of doing good. What may be done by strenuous exertion and persevering application, and that in a short period of time, has been so abundantly demonstrated to the writer, in the case of the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, that he feels no hesitation in persuading himself that ample and growing success will attend this work also.

JOHN TOWNSEND."

Jamaica Row, Bermondsey,
September 25, 1810.

A thousand copies of the above, were printed and circulated in London and in the country. The

result of such circulation did not equal the wishes and expectations of Mr. Townsend, whose sympathising nature was distressed by the receipt of letters from numerous and respectable men, suffering under the chill grasp of poverty, whilst, from the affluent, he received little encouragement of success. To urge on the rich and wealthy, the necessity of the projected Institution, he published some of these letters* with one he had received from a minister, who was anxious to contribute his mite, though his congregation and income were small..

TO THE REV. JOHN TOWNSEND.

" Dear Sir,—So cordially do I approve of the benevolent object which occupies your time and your thoughts to a very great extent, that, with my whole heart, I wish you success; and I will, from this day, pray that the hand of God may be upon you; and that he may prosper, beyond the largest desire of your enlarged mind, this pious and laudable undertaking. That I may not seem like those who say to a destitute brother—*Be ye warmed and filled*, without supplying his necessities, I have enclosed a one pound note, which may, perhaps, purchase one stone. Could I send you enough to purchase one hundred, I am sure it should be done as cheerfully.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, very respectfully."

In the Evangelical Magazine of February, 1811, Mr. Townsend gave notice of his intention to call a general meeting of those persons who had given him their names as friends to this new

* One minister stated his income to be 50*l.* per annum, and the number of his children 5: another, with the same sum, had to bring up and educate 8 children, 6 of whom were sons: a third individual wrote, that he had 6 children under 11 years of age!

object, from whom he hoped a committee might might be formed, and such laws and regulations proposed, as should be likely to promote the good government and permanent prosperity of the Institution.

On the 18th of April this general meeting was held, when it was not found practicable to unite the two objects, as contemplated by Mr. Townsend. The Asylum for Aged Ministers was for the present laid aside, and it was proposed, that children belonging to other denominations should be received; this was also negatived, as being too extended and indefinite.

Various resolutions were discussed and modified; the final result of which was, a decision to elect six children, and place them for tuition with a respectable minister, till funds should be secured for a more efficient plan.

Our friend, seeing the machine put into motion, placed his shoulder to the wheel, to accelerate the movement; which, alas! was slow and heavy. He travelled and preached, soliciting others to like exertions. Many ministers kindly assisted him, and the following letter, similar to several received at this period, will attest the feelings excited.

TO THE REV. JOHN TOWNSEND.

"————, *Nov.* 7, 1811.

"My dear Sir,—I lose no time in replying to a letter which, by this day's post, I have received from you, on the subject of the Congregational School.

The Institution has my most cordial wishes for its increasing support and prosperity. Through the overflowing goodness of God, I am placed in circumstances which render me happily independent

of the benefits of this most laudable Institution; but shall I, on this account, have no feeling of compassion towards those for whom such advantages are so desirable? God forbid! Ever since I first heard of your plan, I have watched its progress with considerable interest, and have felt much painful apprehension, lest, in an age when such frequent appeals are made to the benevolence of the public, it should not receive adequate support. I will, therefore, at some period not very distant, call the attention of my congregation to this subject. Wishing you increasing success,

'I remain, Dear Sir,

'Yours, respectfully."

In 1815, the number of children under private tuition amounting to twenty, the committee thought it advisable to procure a house, and provide a master, who would be under their own immediate superintendence and control. A house was therefore purchased at Lewisham, capable of containing fifty or sixty boys, and many exertions were made by the committee to meet the increased expenditure. To aid the funds, Mr. Townsend took a journey into Yorkshire, and appears to have been tolerably successful; but several remarks in his diary prove that the slow progress of this Institution, and the trifling support it received, much grieved and distressed him. In January, 1818, he thus writes—"To day walked from Tottenham Court to the Poultry, to meet the committee of the Congregational School. How discouraging is the state of things in this Institution; There is not money enough to pay the quarter's bills, and there are no collections or donations in prospect. This second child of mine will never reach the healthy state of the first; yet, *that* was nursed by the world, *this* by the Church."

Amidst increasing infirmities, Mr. Townsend did not relax his exertions. This Institution lay very near his heart, and to the termination of life it was a principal object of interest. He writes in April 3, 1822—"Went to meet the committee of the Congregational School: I tremble for the fate of this Institution; not any money in hand—sixty pounds due to the master. I am almost ready to say, the strength of the bearer of burdens faileth. But is not the earth the Lord's, and the fulness thereof?—does He not say that the gold and the silver are His, and that all hearts are in His hand? Enough, then: I will, in the strength of the Lord, go forward; try to procure collections and subscriptions; and influence richer Christians, if possible, to similar exertions."

With delight he hailed a brighter day, in the reports of 1824 and 1825. From the former, we give the following quotation: "Some of the boys have exhibited pleasing appearances of piety, by associating daily for the purposes of reading the Scriptures and other religious books. In reference to some of them, I have reason to hope that those holy principles are taking firm hold of their minds, which will, ere long, result in holy conduct,—that those seeds of a holy and devoted life are taking deep root in their hearts, which, watered by the genial dews of heaven, will ultimately yield plentiful and refreshing fruits. When I reflect, that it has been the subject of our daily prayers, in the domestic and family circle, that God would pour out upon these youths the spirit of grace and supplication,—of wisdom and the fear of God, I

am encouraged to regard these indications of piety as a token for good." And such they have proved. Five of the youths educated in the school have entered the ministry, and one, who had commenced his studies for the same honourable work, has met, in a better world, his benefactor in this. Some of the youths are settled as medical practitioners; and most of them are entering life with mental acquirements, that will fit them for a rank in society which their descent will not degrade.

CHAPTER VII.

Publication of Claude's Defence, &c.

In the year 1813, Mr. Townsend made a tour for the Hibernian Society, to which he had belonged from its commencement in 1806. Lutterworth being in his route, he visited, with true Protestant feelings, the church where the good old Reformer, Wickliffe, had preached, and the little brook, into which his ashes had been thrown after his exhumation and subsequent burning by his enemies. How much was England indebted to this translator of the Holy Scriptures, which, as Mr. Townsend writes, "are to the moral world what the sun is to the natural world—he who would extinguish or obstruct the light of either, must be considered as the enemy of man." It occasioned inexpressible mortification to a bigoted priesthood, that Wickliffe and other learned and holy men, who loved light rather than darkness, should give the inspired volume to the people in the vernacular tongue. The great body of Reformers on the Continent imitated their pious example. Alas! how soon did the zeal of Protestant churches cool: occupied in local con-

troversies and divisions, the general interests of religion declined; the reading of the Bible was dreadfully neglected, and ministers and churches sunk into a cold and lifeless state. But indolence and apathy have passed away—times of refreshing and revival have come from the presence of the Lord—the Bible is making a rapid progress through the world, whilst the feeble opposition of its foes seems to increase the steadiness and the velocity of its movements.

In 1815, Mr. Townsend published a new edition of Claude's celebrated defence of the Reformation. He had long viewed with a suspicious eye the increase Romanism had made, not only in the mother country, but in her colonies. He deprecated the rising order of the Jesuits, and, with prophetic vision, deplored the indifference manifested by Protestant statesmen and Protestant ministers. He knew, and knew with regret, that English Protestants had much admired a recent popular Roman Catholic writer, who had speciously attacked Claude, and defended Bossuet; that Monsieur Gregoire had just published a work, in which he had charged the Reformation with having produced socinianism and deism. The Ex-Bishop of Blois there denied that the Roman Catholic clergy had sanctioned the massacres of St. Bartholomew.* A spirit of proselytism was rapidly

* Singular affirmation! when history has recorded that the Pope, with his Cardinals, on receiving the news of the massacre, went to church, where they offered thanks that so great a blessing had been conferred on the see of Rome and the Christian world.

spreading on the one hand, and a spirit of religious indifference was gaining ground on the other. Mr. Townsend did not believe the character of the Church of Rome changed; he saw, in the nineteenth century, not merely the same idolatry, but the same cruelty, as in the dark ages. Historians, poets, statesmen, wrote and reasoned as if Romanism had laid aside all its characteristic features, and was becoming mild and gentle—inquiring and forbearing. A tolerant Pope and his enlightened minister, led many an unsuspecting Protestant to believe that the Vatican would never again fulminate Bulls against Bible Societies and Lancasterian Schools. Our friend thought differently —*he* predicted that the Jesuits would again become formidable; that a spirit would again arise in Catholic countries that would aim at the suppression of all most dear to Protestant Christians. Thirteen years have elapsed since the re-publication of Claude, and, during that time, such rapid strides have been made by the Jesuits to recover their former influence and power, that they are filling almost all the professors' chairs in France, and will probably soon gain the entire education of youth. Convents have increased, and now amount to an incredible number. Another Pope has arisen, who has denounced the Bible as a book to be read only by the learned—Lancasterian schools have been suppressed, and all works prohibited that can enlighten the human mind, or teach the way of salvation purely and spiritually. With such sentiments, and under such impressions, Mr. Townsend published Claude, and

in a sketch of his life, made some spirited observations on the influence of Popery.

From the dedication, which was to His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, we quote the following passage. "Our present blessings, under the favour of divine Providence, have been procured through the medium of long-continued sufferings, and strenuous and persevering conflicts with religious intolerance and political despotism. The recollection of these endears them to every bosom truly British. I am satisfied that it will not be forgotten by your Royal Highness, or by the other Princes of your family, that as the Reformation itself, and the zeal of the English Protestants in its defence, led ultimately to the Hanoverian succession,—so it is the genuine, the unbending, and the steady principles of our Protestant communities, and their unshaken attachment to the Reformation, which still form the most natural, the most invulnerable, and the only legitimate rampart round the Throne, the Constitution, the Bibles, and the Altars of our beloved country."

We hope our readers will not find the following passages from the life of Claude dull and uninteresting. They embody so many of Mr. Townsend's sentiments on Romanism, that we should not be faithful biographers, were we not to allow his firm attachment to the Protestant Faith to be a prominent part of this memoir. "Men of education and taste have their partialities with respect to articles of biography. Some are only captivated with accounts of the warrior and the hero, and are never tired with gazing at the exploits, and tracing

the triumphant progress, of those who have traversed the martial field. Others are gratified by viewing the characters, and inspecting the labours, of men of science, who, by lessons of useful instruction, have diffused knowledge—promoted industrious and social habits—extended civilization and domestic happiness—and procured to themselves the honourable title of *the benefactors of mankind.* A third class read, with equal admiration, the lives of celebrated politicians, the thunder of whose eloquence has astonished and electrified crowded and applauding senates, while the wisdom and energy of their measures have immortalized them as the saviours of their country.

"Entertaining and interesting as these several species of biography may be to readers in general, one class still remains to be mentioned, which, in the estimation of an enlightened and zealous Christian, excels them all. He delights to pore over the pages on which are drawn the intellectual and moral portraits of those wise, disinterested, and holy men, who, duly appreciating the value of civil and religious liberty, whilst surrounded on every side by darkness, superstition, and intolerance, have discovered an ardent attachment to Protestant principles, openly and successfully pleading for them; and also cheerfully and patiently enduring a great fight of affliction on their behalf. These truly honourable men might say to us, *Other men have laboured, and ye have entered into their labours.* To those who venerate such characters, and who justly estimate their worth, the editor of this new edition of Claude's

Defence of the Reformation, encourages a hope that this sketch of the life of its author will yield satisfaction and instruction.

"The intolerant spirit and the cruel persecutions of the Romish Church, have for many ages filled the world with lamentation and horror. The history of almost every age and every country is stained and disfigured with the black and hideous catalogue of her infamous crimes. The bigoted and interested advocates of her communion, and the vindictive ministers of her unrighteous vengeance, have impoverished, imprisoned, and murdered thousands, even of their own countrymen, to force the remainder to bow down to the idol of their prejudice, and pronounce that unscriptural and barbarous *shibboleth*, which they have impiously set up as the only passport to life eternal. Some may think I speak too strongly; let then their own language, and their own actions, decide what kind of spirit the enemies of the Reformation exhibited in the ages which preceded Claude;—his own life and experience will show what it was in his time.

"The Christian minister, whos emind is imbued with the love of God and the love of his neighbour, will at all times fill his post, and discharge the duties of his station, with fidelity and firmness, and, by his well-timed instructions and powerful example, diffuse moral and spiritual blessings all around him. His character, however, is most advantageously developed, and his value best ascertained, when the Church is surrounded with dark clouds; when the pitiless storm rages with

fury; when all is danger, confusion, and distress—then he rises out of obscurity, places himself in the foremost point of difficulty and danger, and, by his counsel and energy, encourages the hearts, and strengthens the hands, of the true friends of religion; while, at the same time, he confounds the most artful, and appals the most confident and furious of his enemies. Such a man was John Claude, the subject of this memoir.

"In any period of the Church, such a champion must have held an honourable station, and have obtained the unanimous and grateful suffrages of his fellow Christians, for his acceptable and useful labours in behalf of our common Christianity. But it pleased the great Head of the Church, that he should exist at such a time, and be placed in such a sphere of action, as should render his character, his talents, his influence, and his zeal, not only more conspicuous, but abundantly more subservient to the great interests of the Protestant cause, than they could possibly have been in any other age, in any other place, or under any other circumstances.

"The true ground of Claude's eminence as a minister among the Protestants was this: he discharged the duties of his office, in a manner, and with a spirit, which made it evident that he was not a time-serving teacher—not one that sought his own honour or interest, but a genuine pastor, who felt his own responsibility to Jesus Christ, and studied those impressive charges given to pastors and teachers in the 3d and 33d chapters of Ezekiel's Prophecies—by Jesus Christ to his disciples,

Matt. 10—and by the great apostle of the Gentiles to Timothy and Titus; he made *full proof of his ministry*, he laboured *in season and out of season*, he discharged most punctually the duties of a watchman on the walls of our Protestant Zion. As a spiritual shepherd, he watched well over the flock, nor did he suffer any *ravening wolves*, although habited in *sheep's clothing*, either to enter the fold, or to hover round its precincts, without giving the alarm. In his hand the trumpet of the Gospel gave a loud and a certain sound: and he might justly have applied to himself that appropriate declaration of the Apostle Paul, in which, characterising his own ministry, he said, *I am set for the defence of the Gospel.* Indeed, in many things, Claude resembled that great servant of Jesus Christ; especially, in his resolute and persevering opposition to superstition and idolatry, and in the persecutions and reproaches which he had to endure from bigoted and intolerant priests."

While Claude was pastor and teacher of Nismes, he was chosen Moderator of the Synod of Lower Languedoc. This was a moment when the post of honour was that of danger; and to sustain both, requires a man of superior and varied powers. Speaking of this appointment, Mr. Townsend says—" His comprehensive knowledge and experience, his discernment and penetration, his remarkable equanimity of temper, together with the watchfulness and jealousy which he uniformly exercised over the safety and prosperity of the Protestant Churches, admirably fitted him for this honourable and arduous post. His presence,

influence, and counsel, animated the zeal and confidence of, and became the bond of union and strength to, the pastors and churches of this district, and evidently tended to increase their numbers as well as their prosperity. Their enemies were not idle spectators of what was passing; they saw the wisdom and the energy of the measures pursued, and naturally reasoned with themselves, that if the Protestants were not counteracted either by measures of policy or open force, their cause would gain ground, their principles spread, if they did not finally triumph. With their usual ability, therefore, they plotted against them in the dark, and too successfully, in many cases, carried their point.

"In the progress of the Reformation, there were some moments when the most determined enemies of Claude and of the Protestants, either felt, or at least affected to feel, great concern at the mischiefs which resulted from the divided and hostile state of the two great bodies of professing Christians. While they blamed the Protestants for their tenacious and obstinate adherence to their separation, they yet professed to commiserate with them in the hardships and sufferings in which it involved them; and, affecting to rise above the intolerant spirit of their own religion, they intimated a desire that this state of calamitous warfare might be altogether removed,—that harmony and good-will might be restored, and that Protestants and Catholics, again becoming one great community, might direct their mutual operations to the welfare of their common country. If those who breathed

this gentle spirit, and uttered such soft and alluring sentiments, were indeed the sincere and well-meaning persons they appeared to be, yet they were altogether inattentive to the nature of the question. They either did not, or they would not, see that the evil, and all the complicated mischiefs which it produced, were not to be attributed either to the opinions, or to the obstinacy of the Reformed, but to the spirit and the persecuting measures of the ruling party. The only legitimate and effectual measure which could reach the extremity of the case, was to grant full liberty of conscience in matters of religion; but, unfortunately for the Church and the world, this is a measure to which the whole genius of Popery has ever been opposed, and to which the sovereign Pontiff and his coadjutors never will submit, while they possess power to prevent it. That this is the easiest and the most advantageous method of suppressing discord and civil war, and uniting persons of discordant opinions in one great national compact, has been clearly proved in argument, and demonstrated by experience. The governments which act upon this broad and healing principle, adopt the soundest policy, secure a prompt, a universal, and a permanent attachment to themselves, a cordial obedience to magistrates and to the laws, and diffuse peace and satisfaction through the whole country.*

* The tendency and beneficial influence of this principle were strenuously contended for by the Chancellor l'Hopital, and, to a certain degree, acted upon in his time. If the opinions of this

"Instead of recommending and adopting this easy and expeditious mode of adjusting the great question, either in France or any other country, where the spirit of Popery predominated, powerful princes and learned prelates busied and amused themselves with schemes of comprehension and union: they did not perceive that the thing was impracticable, unless the heads of the Romish communion were prepared to give up those unscriptural and odious things which constituted the basis of the separation which the Reformed had already made, and of the propriety and justice of which they were so deeply convinced, that the most alluring promises would not seduce, nor the most cruel persecutions drive, them from their adherence to it. Their opposers did not understand the true ground of action among Protestants. Had it been humour, or ease and interest, or mere matter of opinion, they might have yielded to a compromise: but they were impelled by what is far beyond all these. They were governed by the power of conscience—the light had broken in upon them—they saw by the aid of the Scriptures, that they had wandered from *the narrow way which leadeth to life;* they had no alternative—they were obliged to separate; they were unable any longer to endure the superstition, the impurity, and the idolatry, of the Church of Rome. All hope of

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great man had been listened to, and his conciliatory principles uniformly acted upon and established, the honour and the strength of France had not been so shamefully sported with, and diminished, by the persecutions which spread confiscation, banishment, and murder, from one extremity of the kingdom to another.

reform, from either Popes or Councils, had vanished; and those who searched the Scriptures, heard them directly say, *Come out of her, my people, that ye partake not of her sins.* They believed that the salvation of their souls depended on their obedience; and, of course, that their worldly interest, their social comforts, yea, even life itself, ought to be sacrificed rather than renounce their allegiance to God. Against such views and such impressions of mind it was in vain to argue; and it was equally futile to attempt their subversion, by artifice, or their subjugation, by force."

From its avowed and insidious enemies, the reformed Faith in France had little repose, and its faithful pastors were the peculiar objects of hatred. The eminent Claude, driven from Languedoc to Montauban, and from Montauban to Paris, was the head of this persecuted Church. Equally qualified for this new scene of difficulty, the pastor, tutor, and moderator of the provincial churches, displayed a cool firmness, and an unwavering rectitude, which stamped him as one able to brave the storm in its utmost fury. Referring to this removal to Charenton, Mr. Townsend thus writes: "We here see the wisdom and power of that overruling Providence, which takes under its protection the interests and prosperity of the Church. The very things which its persecutors did to undermine its prosperity, turned out contrary to their expectations, and finally strengthened and extended the cause which they were intended to destroy. It was so in the first age of the Christian Church: *I would that ye should understand, brethren,* says the

Apostle Paul, *that the things which happened to me have fallen out rather for the furtherance of the Gospel.* The light of the mid-day is not more offensive and intolerable to the owl, than the luminous and powerful preaching of the pure Gospel was, to the ignorant and vicious part of the Roman Catholic hierarchy at Paris. The nearer such a man as Claude approached to them, the greater their enmity to the Reformation; and they consequently became more impatient of delaying their grand effort for the extirpation of this supposed heresy. The slow and uncertain process of reasoning it down by fair argument, through the medium of the pulpit and the press, they were fully satisfied would be an unavailing attempt; it had been tried with every advantage on their side, and had not succeeded. They therefore determined to adopt measures more expeditious in their progress, and far more efficacious in their result, and which naturally harmonize more with the spirit of Popery, and the well-known character of the Court of Rome. Nor is it too much to say, that these are the only measures by which Popery will ever triumph over the sound and scriptural arguments by which Protestantism is upheld and extended. Allow the population of Catholic countries the privilege of reasonable creatures—let them think and examine for themselves—let them search the Scriptures, as Christ commanded, and the effect will be similar to that which was produced upon the minds of the Bereans, who are commended for not giving credit even to the Apostle's testimony, till they had

been allowed an open and unrestrained discussion of the great questions in dispute between them, and that the former had vanquished the latter in the fair field of argument—that they had given up the contest—retired in disgrace; and that, as a natural consequence, the general cause of the Reformed had been deeply wounded, and gradually sunk into decay and oblivion, from which the talents and zeal of their ministers were utterly incapable of recovering it.

"Instead of this being the case, Claude and the phalanx of enlightened and honest men who shared the labours and the dangers of this eventful period, remained on the field of battle not only unsubdued but undismayed, and were fully prepared to renew the conflict with invigorated courage and ardour, and with the fairest prospect of success, if their enemies had not resorted, in the most dishonourable manner, to agents and means which always have been, and ever will be, a disgrace to the cause in which they are employed. Claude and his companions were subdued—subdued did I say? No! they were not; they never would have been subdued in the field of controversial warfare, if their enemies had continued to use lawful weapons, and had allowed them common justice; but the free use of the press was denied them: I might therefore rather say, that their hands were first tied by their oppressors, and they were then driven, in the most forcible manner, from the field of battle, by the strong and irresistible arm of intolerance and despotism.

"While the Protestant ministers were allowed

to write and preach freely, while their colleges were kept open, and their churches possessed the entire freedom of religious worship, their whole body was full of courage and zeal; they prospered, and would have done so more and more; but, *Behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power.* The King, the nobles, the whole hierarchy, were against them, and never ceased to oppress and injure them by every possible means —murdering some, banishing others, and either imprisoning the remainder, or compelling them to abjure their religion, do violence to their consciences, and act hyprocritically before God and men."

Claude belongs to the Protestant Church, whether of France of of England—we will not therefore give even a summary of his life, whose every action must be well known, and whose zeal, courage, and disinterestedness have made him a bright example to after ages. The storm which had been long gathering, burst upon the Reformed Church in 1685. The pastors were expelled, and Claude allowed only twenty-four hours to leave a kingdom, where he had suffered injuries and made sacrifices, that none but a persecuting church would have exacted. With Mr. Townsend's remarks on the revocation of the edict of Nantz, and its general results, we shall conclude.

"The commercial and manufacturing interests of France were dreadfully injured, civil and ecclesiastical tyranny were consolidated, and the whole population sunk most completely into ignorance

the deeds perpetrated in France were commended and exulted in by the Pope, the Cardinals, and other men high in the confidence of the Romish Church, as services truly meritorious in themselves, and highly acceptable to God--when they saw such men as Bossuet, Fenelon, and Flechier, (who in all the common walks of human life were estimated as enlightened and humane men,) either conniving at, or having no influence to prevent or diminish, those impolitic, those frantic, those murderous measures of the civil, ecclesiastical, and military despotism, which stalked through the land, eclipsing its true glory, and diminishing its physical and moral strength—when they saw that popish rulers did not scruple to extend the population, increase the trade, and greatly promote the wealth and political strength of rival nations, provided they could annihilate Protestanism and toleration at home—when, I say, the Protestants saw these things, their hatred to Popery was strengthened, their union and attachment to each other became more close, as a means of common safety. It also induced them to discountenance every political measure, and every class of men, from whence it was likely the interests of the Church of Rome would derive the slightest advantage. England and Holland, especially, became more united, and more jealous for the safety of their Protestant communities; aud the glorious Revolution was hastened, matured, and consolidated, by the serious impressions which the ruin of the Protestants in France had produced.

"It is likely I may be censured by some, for the

remarks I have made on the spirit of Popery. They may think it is the result of an indiscreet zeal for the Protestant cause—that I have not given due attention to the nature of the times,—or carefully watched the spirit and language of modern Roman Catholics, who are much more enlightened than their forefathers,—and have also discovered much more mildness and liberality in their writings;—and that this indicates a new and interesting era in the opinions and feelings of the Catholic body. I wish the reader to know, that it is not the result of ignorance, or inattention to these points, which has led me to speak as I have, but that it is the knowledge of facts which has impelled me to pursue the course I have taken. I have watched the spirit and language of the moderate, candid, and liberal part of the Catholic body with the greatest satisfaction; and I hope that this spirit and temper will widely spread, and powerfully operate to bring the two great bodies of Protestants and Catholics closer together, at least as to mutual expressions of good will, and to a co-operation in measures of general utility. But I own my apprehension that this spirit is very limited, and also that it is calculated to produce the false notion that Popery itself is altered, that it is not so inimical to Protestantism as formerly, and that there is no need for any caution or jealousy for the interests of the latter. The impression on my mind is different; and therefore I have freely expressed it: but I hope I have not discovered any illiberality of sentiment, or used any expression incompatible with the mild and gentle spirit of

the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus. Where I have spoken harshly, it is not against the *persons*, but against the *spirit* of their religion, and the measures which that *spirit* has produced.

"The modern advocates of Popery are, some of them, of a very different stamp from the ancient ones, whose mode of attack was so rude and coarse, so full of wrath and destruction, that it carried its own remedy with it. But the modern Catholics, at least in England, are enlightened, cool, and reflecting men; they preach up candour and charity at the moment in which they are instilling the praises and principles of Popery into publications, where we are so fascinated with the talents of the writers, and the brilliancy of their style and manner, that we forget, when reading of the majesty, the purity, the amiableness, and the loveliness of religion, that it is not that described in the Holy Scriptures in its own simplicity and beauty, or in our Protestant churches,—but that it is religion degraded and distorted in the pompous ceremonies at Rome, and the gaudy show which is exhibited when the Pontiff is performing high mass. If these friends to the religion of Rome are thus active, and force their views of the popish religion upon the Protestant eye by such various and favourable mediums, surely one Protestant minister will be forgiven for a well-meant endeavour to guard his fellow Christians against the danger of deception, and for endeavouring, though feebly, to show Popery as it has always been, as it still is, and always will be, in its own *nature*, a superstitious, an idolatrous, an intolerant, and a cruel

religion. I am no friend to persecution; I would extend religious liberty and the rights of conscience, in their fullest measure, to the Roman Catholics. But I would also have Protestants steady and zealous in their attachment to the Protestant cause; I would have them strain every nerve in the use of legitimate and honourable means to obstruct the increase of Popery, and to prevent the Protestant population of the United Kingdom from going back to that unscriptural and odious religion.

"It is very evident, that too many Protestants have lost their abhorrence of Popery; that Protestant governments have not used any exertions to remove or to restrain its unfounded and insolent claims, or to procure toleration for Protestants in Catholic countries; that a great number of Roman Catholic institutions have been formed, and have been permitted to spread the doctrines and discipline of that Church; that a great many converts, children and grown persons, have been made from the Protestant faith both in England and Ireland. Let it also be remembered, that the Roman Catholics of the old school have not utterly abandoned the hope of Great Britain once more being brought under the influence of a Catholic king, and of course to a connexion with Rome. A striking proof of this, is afforded us by the conduct of the late Cardinal York, who, after having for many years received a pension from his present Majesty, actually bequeathed his supposed right and interest in the crown of Great Britain to a

foreign Roman Catholic prince. The Pope also claims a power over all the Catholic subjects of even Protestant governments, to which I cannot help thinking conscientious English Roman Catholics are bound to submit; and, if so, their religion is incompatible with their allegiance to their sovereign.

"Although it has been admitted, that the language and spirit of some of the modern advocates of Popery differ widely from what they have usually been, still I cannot help repeating to myself the words of good old Isaac, *The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.* There is such a leaning toward the light and liberality of Protestantism on the one side, and yet such a cleaving to the darkness and tyranny of Popery on the other, that one is constrained to say, *Why halt ye between two opinions?*

"If the reader is inclined to think that too much severity, and too much apprehension, have been discovered in regard to Popery, he must recollect, that the Editor of this new edition of Claude's Defence, in traeing out a sketch of the author's life, has been constrained to walk over the desolations of the Protestant churches of France,—to behold the smoking ruins of their colleges and churches,—to hear the cry of their widows and orphans, and witness the poverty and distress of those thousands of fugitives who fled from their native homes into foreign lands; and that, after taking a retrospect of these scenes, he has looked into futurity, and calculated what would be the

result, if that crown which Cardinal York has bequeathed to a Roman Catholic prince, should ever be placed on such a head? It is enough for my argument, that the thing is even possible. What, then, would be the result? It would issue in the ruin of *our* Protestant colleges and academies, —the shutting up or demolition of *our* Christian temples, the proscription of *our* Bibles,—in short, imprisonment, banishment, and death, would again desolate *our* land; nor would the change be less extensive, or less tremendous, than that which befel the Jewish Church of old. Let Protestants look at, and ponder over, the awful fact. In the days of her prosperity, David said, *Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generations following:* such is the present glory and moral strength of our British Zion. Pass to the contemplation of the same Church in the days of Jeremiah: *All that pass by clap their hands at thee; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth? All thine enemies have opened their mouths against thee: they hiss and gnash the teeth: they say, We have swallowed her up, certainly this is the day that we looked for, we have found, we have seen it.* Such would be the desolation of *our* churches, and the exulting language of *our* enemies, if ever the throne of Great Britain should be re-occupied by a Roman Catholic prince.

Improbable as is this danger, and far as I would fain hope it will ever be kept, yet we ought, as Protestants, to watch against the smallest degree of evil; and, in respect of our British Zion, we ought to indulge the sentiments and language of Holy Writ, *Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.*"

CHAPTER VIII.

Establishment of a Fund for the Relief of Aged Ministers.

In the early part of 1816, Mr. Townsend was deeply afflicted by the loss of his youngest son, who died in the West Indies. The intelligence was conveyed to him while on a committee for assisting the persecuted Protestants in the south of France. The friend who gave him the letter containing the melancholy news, said, "More room for faith and patience." So touching are the remarks in Mr. T.'s journal, that we give them as written at the period.

January 4, 1816. "This was a day of deep distress to me, and mine; but I hope I *felt* as a Christian ought to *feel*, and *spoke* as a Christian ought to *speak*. I hastened to my family to mingle my tears with theirs, and weep over the loss of one whom we all loved and pitied. Never until now could I so well understand the meaning of David's words, or so fully enter into his feelings, when he exclaimed, *O Absalom, my son, my son!* I have often thought that some texts resemble pictures; if you would see them to advantage, you must stand in one particular position: in that

position I then stood; I had lost an open-hearted, a generous, but an unfortunate son." On this occasion, the bereaved parent delivered a sermon from the following text. *And Aaron held his peace.* Lev. x. 3.

During this year, and that of 1817, Mr. Townsend appears to have suffered much from delicate health: his lungs were frequently menaced with attacks that were always alarming—often dangerous; but, of abatement in exertion, there was none; early and late he was attending committees, or preaching, and performing the private duties of a pastor.

On the 1st of January, 1818, he says, "I have now passed my sixtieth year, and feel many growing infirmities, and see my contemporaries dropping, one after another, into the grave. Each one, as he departs, seems to say to me, *Be ye also ready.*"

On the 13th of the same month, we find the following entry. "Yesterday was the Deaf and Dumb election; I was extremely unwell the whole day, and was glad that the plan of taking the poll was so managed, as to allow of my getting home early. My frame often shakes, and will soon be dissolved. May I not only obtain the house which is from above, but feel the joy and bliss of that expectation, which the Apostle so happily experienced!"

In this year was commenced a fund for the relief of Aged and Infirm Ministers. It had been with much regret that Mr. Townsend had seen his efforts to provide an asylum for them fruitless. The Congregational School was in a languishing state, and no hope remained as to the

establishment of the former. His appeal to the public in 1811, had produced a bequest to Mr. T. from a benevolent lady in Bristol of 500*l.*, which was to be appropriated for the use of aged and decayed dissenting ministers. The interest of this sum, since that period, had been distributed according to the wishes of the testatrix.* But a more permanent provision for this benevolent purpose was opened January 22, 1818, by a meeting of the gentlemen of Mr. Coward's trust, and Mr. T.; at which it was proposed to form a society for Aged Ministers belonging to the three denominations. The commencement of the funds was to be 1000*l.*, advanced by the above trustees, and the 500*l.* bequeathed to Mr. T. in 1811. A resolution and an address were prepared, but the ministers of the Independent class generally disapproved of the union, not choosing to connect themselves with the Unitarians. Mr. Townsend wished the object to be carried into effect, either conjointly, or separately: his preference would have been for separation; but he did not think that the union involved any compromise of religious principle. How much his peaceful spirit dreaded unnecessary discussion, is evident from the following letter.

"*Feb.* 7, 1818.

"My dear Friend,—I am sorry to say, the further we advance in our endeavour to form a society for aged ministers, the more enlarged, the more indefinite, and the more determinate, are the dislike and the opposition.

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* Mr. Townsend had associated Dr. Collyer with himself, as joint trustee for this 500*l.*

"I see no utility in going into the union, if the whole of our denomination hold back; and it has even been intimated, that if the question be carried, a public protest would be not only made, but published. Surely then, strife, division, and heart-burnings, will be the result of perseverance. Would it not be best to prevent all these, by abandoning the object, and proposing an adjournment?

"Yours, most sincerely,

"JOHN TOWNSEND."

On the 10th of February, the general meeting was held, when the Rev. Mr. Taylor introduced the business of the day, by proposing that a society should be formed for the relief of Aged and Infirm Ministers, who had imperative claims upon them, and upon the whole circle of Christians. It was his opinion, that funds might be raised upon the basis of an union, which would include the three denominations, as the claims of humanity were not connected with a difference in religious sentiments.

On the resolution having been read by the secretary, Mr. Townsend offered himself to the notice of the chair, and proposed an immediate adjournment; but it was impossible to prevent discussion, and orthodoxy and heterodoxy, heresy and schism, were terms frequently introduced. After a debate of some length, Mr. Taylor withdrew his motion, and the question was disposed of for that time.

In the June following, this society was formed on the plan of union—Mr. Taylor advancing the 1000*l.* from Mr. Coward's trustees, and Mr. Townsend the 500*l.*, which had been left to his optional disposal amongst poor ministers.

The year 1819 was stamped with the same characteristic features as the preceding. Much

exertion—much suffering. Every duty, whether that of a philanthropist or pastor, was fulfilled with the energy of health, rather than the languor of disease. A quotation from Mr. T.'s journal will best verify this assertion.

Feb. 14.—" Yesterday was a day of trial, as I feared a suspension of my usual labours. In the morning, passed a short time with my friend Mrs. C., one of those members of my church in whom I find much pleasure. In health, she exhibited the temper and conversation of a Christian; and in affliction, she discovered the submission and calmness of one who believed that all things work together for good to those who love God. Attended the Missionary Society at eleven—the Bible Society at twelve—Missionary Society again at four—went to see the wife of Captain——, who was ill, and returned to meet the Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Bible Society."

In the March of this year, Mr. Townsend's spirits were much depressed by the loss of his long-esteemed friend, Mr. Hardcastle—a man, who, eminently dear to Christians in general, was tenderly beloved by all who were favoured with his friendship. For many years the tie of pastor had been productive of spiritual communion between these kindred minds, who were not dissimilar in the leading features of their character. Mr. T.'s impressions, on visiting Hatcham House after the decease of this excellent man, are given in the following passage.—" The tears started to my eyes—a gloom seized my spirits—the trees—the favourite dog—the closed windows—all seemed

to say, He is gone—yes, he is gone! The darkness—the silence that reigned in every room, completed the melancholy tale. The sadness and tears of the servants, silently, but eloquently, proclaimed the worth and excellency of the master they had lost. Mr. H. died, as he had lived, tranquil and devout. We shall meet no more till I see him in the world of light and happiness above."

Mr. Townsend's chapel having undergone extensive repairs and alterations in this year, he felt some anxiety that the debt should be liquidated before his death. The congregation acted liberally, but he collected from his private friends 450*l.* to complete this object. On this occasion, he thus writes.—"How pleased am I that my successor will come into the connexion under auspicious circumstances. Oh! that a large portion of the Holy Spirit may rest upon him, and may he see the seed which I have sown, spring up, and bear much fruit. May peace and union reign through the church and congregation, exhibiting the effect of those truths which I have taught them from the pages of inspiration.

CHAPTER IX.

Severe Illness.—Domestic Trials.

JANUARY 1, 1820. "I have this day entered upon a new year, and when I reflect upon all the way which the Lord my God has led me these more than forty years in the wilderness, with what humility and self-abasement should I confess my numerous failures in duty, my backslidings, and multiplied imperfections. Yet, while mourning over my sins, what reason is furnished for thankfulness and gratitude to God, for His abundant goodness. The streams of mercy have flowed towards me, in a broader and deeper channel than during any preceding year of my life."

Such was the record in the commencement of 1820, from which date Mr. Townsend appears to have kept a more regular journal. While engaged in selecting from this most interesting source, his biographer has been astonished at the piety, humility, ardour, and perseverance that enabled the subject of this memoir, to triumph over a disease threatening him with immediate death. Sleepless by night, indefatigable by day, what

powers are equal to the sketching, even of the features of a portrait, that must, if sketched faithfully, appear exaggerated ; the moral and Christian portrait cannot be filled up. To his course, the words of the inspired writer are applicable. *The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

Mr. Townsend commenced the year with much indisposition : the cold sensibly affected his health, and, when attending early committees, he would make several efforts to leave home before he could accomplish it ; but, neither failing health, nor that which operated on it so unfavourably, the inclemency of the weather, could prevent him from engaging in societies, whose object was to promote the glory of God and the good of man.

On one occasion, he thus writes : " These delightful occupations, in which I have been for so many years engaged, will soon cease ; my study has attractions so powerful, that I should spend my time there, did not a sense of duty render my personal attendance necessary, where I must assist in the extension of the Gospel, the dispersion of the Bible, and the education of children. How gladly would I renounce my connexion with the committees, and devote my days to study ; but, the words of our Lord are imperative, *This ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone.* Lord Jesus, give me grace and wisdom to serve Thee more fully ; may I aim at nothing but Thy glory, and the salvation of my fellow men. Time becomes every day more precious ; two must be made out of one, and, to secure hours for more

study and writing, I must rise earlier, sit up later, and improve every moment. Never let me forget my dear brother's motto, that 'this is the world for employment,—heaven for enjoyment.' But this is anticipation; I may not live till the summer, for my feebleness tells me that I am mortal.

> 'Teach me the measure of my days,
> Thou Maker of my frame.'"

There seems to have been no relaxation from labour till the commencement of April, when symptoms of an alarming illness appeared. Fever —pain in the side—loss of strength, were followed by the rupture of a vessel on the lungs. This brought Mr. Townsend under medical care; and not only was he forbidden to attend to those objects so dear to his heart, but he was not allowed to converse. At this period, his mind appears to have been perfectly tranquil and composed. He writes, "Let me not repine, but leave all to the wisdom and goodness of God. How kind has He been to me; yet His mercies and corrections leave me far from that humble, holy, zealous frame of mind which a Christian ought to possess. How clear is the way of salvation, how rich the blessings it contains; yet, alas! I do not enjoy that personal assurance of my own interest, or feel it elevate my soul to God with that devout pleasure I see some enjoy. If, however, my days are to be marked by a less devoted joy, and by a weaker confidence, I hope to reap, from my affliction, more humbling views of myself, more dominion over the world and my own heart, and to increase

more in knowledge, grace, and holiness. O that the Lord may cheer me with a sense of His forgiving love, and a foretaste of glory; then I shall say, *To live is Christ: and to die is gain.* The complaint increasing, Mr. Townsend went to Hastings, and here it seemed to baffle medical skill. Excessive depletion reduced his strength, and in this state of personal suffering, he experienced that sorrows come not singly. Apparently on the borders of the grave himself, he was called on to sympathize with a daughter-in law, to whom he was tenderly attached, and who was dying with a cruel and fatal malady. At this mournful moment, a stroke awaited him, still more severe in its nature; for death had pointed his dart too successfully at the sweetest of his grand-children, after an illness, so rapid, that her danger was only perceived a few hours before the stroke was fatal and final. Beautiful in person, amiable in character, she promised to bless his age by her attachment and her worth. On this occasion, he wrote the following letter:

"*Hastings, May*, —, 1820.

"My dear Children,—After many painful and agonizing feelings, I have determined to break the mournful silence, which affliction and bereavement have so long imposed. When I recollect that neither chance nor fate is the source of these events, but, that the hairs of our heads are all numbered, and that no sorrow comes without the appointment of the Father of Mercies, I feel an imperious obligation to say, *It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.*

"This providence speaks to us, with a loud voice, to love less the things of time and sense, and to fix our hearts more habitually, and more intensely, upon the things which are spiritual and eternal;

these have a solidity and a permanency, rendering them worthy of our warmest affections. I find myself too fondly attached to the endearing ties of life, too prone to draw my daily pleasure from these broken cisterns, while I neglect that fountain of living water, whose refreshing and healing virtues, constitute the only effectual remedy against the maladies and sorrows of human life.

"When the tidings of your deep affliction reached us, I was standing on the verge of the grave, not knowing how soon I might descend thither. How little had we thought of the last enemy making such a sudden and cruel seizure on the loveliest flower in our domestic paradise. Oh! how unfathomable are the ways of God. Darkness and clouds are indeed round about him, but, nevertheless, we are sure He is wise, just, and merciful, and, in eternity, we shall know, why the Lord has dealt thus with us. She was not more lovely in your eyes than in ours, and had we been, by divine Providence, permitted to say which of your dear group we should have selected to have been the future blessing of our age, our reply would have been, spare——but He who hath taken her to Himself, is worthy of the best, and who shall say unto Him, *What doest Thou?*

"How deeply we have felt and sympathized with you, my dear children, I cannot tell—may we all reap some spiritual advantage from the many strokes of affliction, with which our Heavenly Father visits us. May the young ones be induced to remember their Creator in the days of their youth; and may we, who are approaching the house appointed for all living, ripen in knowledge, experience, and purity: when summoned, may we cheerfully say, farewell to earth, and the dear connexions which have so long and so powerfully chained our affections here below * * *

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"I remain, my dear children,

"Your affectionate father,

"JOHN TOWNSEND."

Amidst this sea of sorrow, the spirits of our invalid were much cheered by the numerous letters from excellent and distinguished persons who regretted his absence, and longed for his return. Many, believing he was near his entrance to the

world of spirits, informed him of sermons and conversation, which had been the means employed to rescue them from their slavery to the Prince of darkness, and had brought them under the dominion of the Lord of life and glory. One gentleman, who writes that he had recently lost his only child, says, " May God prolong a life so valuable. How has He honoured you, by making you the founder and promoter of so many institutions, whose object was the spiritual and temporal relief of man. You, my dear sir, will never know the extent of your pulpit usefulness, till your arrival in another and a better world. A crown of rejoicing awaits you above, adorned with many a gem you are little aware of." The writer proceeds to name a sermon, that had been preached many years before. On this incident, Mr. T. remarks, " Here is another proof that God has made that sermon useful; and shall I be proud and vain-glorious? No, rather let humility and gratitude be the result; let it make me more diligent, more prayerful, and more dependent on God's Holy Spirit—for, *Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God alone can give the increase.*

Much apprehension being excited for the life of Mr. Townsend's eldest daughter, who was the mother of a large family and of the grand-child he had so recently lost, he writes—May 9.—" All things are in the hands of God; let me be quiet and submissive, committing my sorrows to a wise and tender Father. Prepare me, Lord, for all that Thou hast appointed; rebuke our fears, give us faith and patience, and, if we are to have more

breaches made in our domestic, our happy, our united circle, let each say from the heart, *The will of the Lord be done.*

"From these anxieties, let me turn to a more pleasing subject. The first public missionary service is now commencing—Lord, be in the midst of this assembly! O let thy light and presence, thy blessing and power, be manifested. May this season be the most glorious and impressive that our useful society has ever witnessed. I am not a willing absentee; my soul loves the cause, and will ever pray for its prosperity, and for those who are sent out to carry the everlasting Gospel to the heathen, that they may be imbued with the simple, humble, and sanctified temper of that great missionary, Paul of Tarsus."

May 13.—"Awoke this morning with oppression at the chest, and difficulty of breathing. During the sleepless hours of last night, I endeavoured to derive instruction and consolation from the hymn, 'Come, let us join our cheerful songs.' Our favourite poet must have founded it upon the celestial anthem, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.* What subject more suitable for meditation! Can we be Christians, can we believe, and hope, that Jesus died for us, and not feel a more deep-toned, and more extatic joy? ah, surely this is the point on which we fail; we do not make that believing, that personal, that assured appropriation of Christ crucified, to ourselves. Lord, help me, and my dear children, if they ever read these reflections of their parent—help each of them, to

say of the slain Lamb of God, *Who loved me, and gave Himself for me!*"

The air, and retirement at the sea side, gradually restoring Mr. Townsend to comparative health, he writes, "How wonderfully has God restrained the progress of my complaint! To-morrow I shall have the privilege of going up to the house of the Lord; let me enter into His courts with praise. Forbidden public duties, may I be thankful that I am permitted to be a hearer, and may I go with an humble and teachable spirit; not to criticise, but to sit at the feet of Jesus, and to be instructed through the instrumentality of his young minister. If I am not allowed to convey blessings, O Lord, grant that I may receive them; and let my knowledge, experience, and obedience, be enlarged and confirmed. Let Thy Spirit rest upon my church and congregation—rather would I pray that Thy blessing may rest upon all the ministers and churches of Christ throughout the world. May many souls be converted, and many saints be edified and built up in Thy most holy faith."

While Mr. T. was residing at Hastings, he was much in the sick room of one who suffered as a Christian, and displayed the supports derived from a knowledge, that God was her Father, and that a mansion was prepared for her in the regions where neither pain nor sin can enter. As the shadows dispersed, faith and joy brightened; the darkness of the valley presented nothing terrific. Young, and the mother of an only and beloved child, she

presented, even to the aged and experienced minister, an interesting and instructive example. Her disease was of the most painful and lingering nature; but patience had its perfect work. On the evening previous to his leaving the country, he writes,—"I have had the last interview with my dear S——. We joined in prayer, or rather praise, to God; for she is more the object of envy, than of pity. With what confidence does she repose her soul upon the promises and grace of her Redeemer! with what pleasure does she anticipate her entrance into glory! May I derive benefit from such a scene; may I learn more of the excellency of those promises, which produce in her soul that heavenly frame, that cheerful resignation, and that *desire to depart and be with Christ!* O that my last hours may be equally calm, equally cheerful, equally elevated above the fear of death, and the entangling influence of those ties which chain me to the present life, and tend to reconcile me to an absence from the purity and sublime enjoyments of the heavenly world!"

The circle of Mr. Townsend's home duties and those connected with the great objects of humanity, were dear and necessary as the air he breathed. Deep and severe had been his afflictions; they had tried the faith of the Christian, and the tenderness of the man; but the graces of the former appear to have been in constant exercise, and the retirement of sickness had furnished fresh sources of grateful love, and renewed motives for exertion.

Urged by his medical attendants to remain longer by the sea-side, he resisted all their solicitations, and returned to London before his health was sufficiently established. The day after his arrival, he says, "God has mercifully brought us home in peace, and again am I seated in my beloved study. O that I may here find more of the divine presence, and have closer communion with my God! Here, by devout meditation and prayer, may I find greater preparation for my ministerial duties! I have met the branches of my afflicted family, and wept with them at the recollection of that bereavement which has taken from me the eldest of my grand-children, a lovely and pleasant flower, who promised to be a joy and blessing. Once more have I been permitted to meet my dear and affectionate brother, with some of my kind and attentive flock, whose congratulations have been numerous, on my recovery and safe arrival among them. How pleasing, after thirty-six years of pastoral duties, to find that I am still loved and honoured! This mercy comes from Thee, O my God! and let a sense of it, stimulate me to labour more cheerfully, to promote their growth in grace. How varied have been the deliverances and the supplies which God has bestowed upon me! What unfeigned humility ought to fill my heart for its multiplied imperfections! The iniquity of my holy things would overwhelm me with despair, if it were not that I have an Advocate with the Father, even that Jesus who is the propitiation for sin. There is all my trust, and thence I draw all my help and all my hope."

The aim of every quotation given in these pages, is, that the soul, with its feelings, may be developed; that springs of action may be rendered visible, and that hidden principles may be traced to their source. The only introduction to the following remarks, is, that, at the period they were made, the writer was in a state of health which alarmed all to whom he was dear.

" Have been to the committee of the Bible Society, where I met with many of my old colleagues and dear friends. The intelligence from Leander Van Ess, &c., was most reviving. *What hath God wrought!* Let the enemies of the Bible, and of Bible Institutions, continue to oppose—our faith, our hope, our joy, are fully justified by the divine declaration in Isaiah, lv. 11, 12. I longed to pay my first visit to the Missionary Rooms, to meet the South African Committee; but prudence pleaded delicate health. On reading, in the evening, Mr. Grattan's letter to the Catholics, I suspected that cowardice and unsuitable caution had prevailed to keep me from my duty. Mr. G. stated, that, ' though suffering from great indisposition and debility, he was resolved to go to London, that he might move the Catholic question.' Shall politicians, shall merchants, shall those who fight for their country, hazard health and life in their professional duties, and shall Christian ministers, who bear the standard of the cross, under the great Captain of salvation, retreat from their posts through timidity and fear of danger? How ought those who are engaged in efforts favourable to the best interests of a be-

nighted world, to feel honoured in the service, and to be constant in the duty!"

May 21.—"After a severe and dangerous illness, I have, to-day, entered on a new course of ministerial duties. May I be enabled to make full proof of my ministry, and win many souls to Christ, consecrating myself more unreservedly to the service and glory of my Redeemer! My text was, Psalm lxviii. 19, 20. I have endeavoured to impress upon the minds of my affectionate people a strong sense of the mutual obligation God has laid us under, to live nearer to Him, to be more firmly united in Christian love, and to be more diligent and constant in the ordinances of the sanctuary. O Lord! forgive, assist, and bless; let a spirit of prayer be poured out upon the pastor and people; and let the tears of joy which have been shed to-day, on our meeting at the footstool of divine mercy, be followed by a plentiful harvest of holy obedience!"

22.—"Attended this day the committee of examination at the Missionary Rooms, and met the directors in the evening. My spirits were much affected at the kind and earnest manner in which both ministers and laymen greeted me on my return among them. It is, indeed, a blessing to enjoy the friendship and the society of the disciples of Jesus. May it be my happiness and honour to spend a blissful eternity, with *the spirits of just men made perfect in the general Assembly and Church of the first-born.*"

June.—"Yesterday evening, had the pleasure of hearing my dear brother preach in my pulpit;

it may be the last sermon I may be permitted to hear. It was faithful, animating, and consolatory, and supplied me with materials for meditation and prayer in my wakeful hours. This dear friend is going to leave me. May the good will of Him who dwelt in the bush, protect, guide, and bless him! Never was there a more sincere, devoted, and cheerful Christian, a more kind and benevolent heart, a more faithful, animated, and disinterested labourer in the ministry, than George Townsend. May I not record, with peculiar delight, the strong and undeviating affection which he has shown to me as a brother? His solicitude during my illness, the constancy and ardour of his prayers for my recovery, and his unbounded joy at its accomplishment, show, in lively characters, his fraternal love. Blessed be God, that our mutual affection will be matured and eternized in the heavenly world! And can I, who am so much his inferior in grace and consolation, speak so confidently of shining with him in the glory of that world, to which his spirit is so much more assimilated than mine? How far does he surpass me and many others, in resignation to God, when storms of affliction assail him! I shall never forget either his attitude, countenance, or expressions, after his last sermon, when, to use his own words, he spoke of the 'divine philosophy of the Bible.'"

Mr. Townsend continued his labours, with very little relaxation from suffering. Nature seems to have been frequently oppressed; but it was evident to all around him, that the spiritual triumphed over the material. On Saturday, June 24, he

writes, " I tremble in the prospect of the labours to-morrow will bring; but the Lord has helped me in times past." On the following day, when inclined to sleep after six o'clock, he was roused by that passage, *What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, and call upon thy God.* The injunction was obeyed, and the effect that early morning produced on his shattered frame, is thus described:— " How beautiful are yonder hills! how gratefully are the birds chanting the praises of their Creator and Benefactor! The new-mown hay, the shrubs, the flowers, are uniting their fragrance to delight man, the master of all. But these are temporal blessings: let me enter into the enjoyment of those that are spiritual, by taking a view of the heavenly paradise. I will approach the tree of life, and sit down under the shade. O Lord, give me faith to pluck the rich and satisfying fruit, that I may be strengthened and refreshed thereby! Has not the Lord of the garden said, in the most kind and condescending way, *Eat, O friends, &c.*"

In the autumn of this year, Mr. Townsend was menaced with an attack on the lungs, similar to that in the spring. The sea-side was recommended, and, in September, he went to Hastings, where quiet and retirement partially restored him. On his return to London, we find him pursuing the grand objects of his life, with the consciousness of one who feels the sentence of death within him. He writes, " Still very ill, unable to walk. I long to pass this day in my beloved study; but the widow, the fatherless, and the afflicted demand my time. How this weak, disordered

body hinders the soul in its operations! Apprehensive that my work is nearly finished, I am amazed that I am not more deeply impressed by a consciousness of my responsibility; that I am not more ardent in my addresses to the consciences of both saints and sinners. When I enter the celestial world, shall I not be ready to exclaim, *Why me, O Lord, why me?*"

The trifling support the Congregational School received, appears to have been a source of much anxiety; and, as he found nature sinking, the fear of its being resigned for want of funds, was very painful. A new object, in the November of this year, engaged his attention. In his journal is the following entry:—"Attended the committee of examination, at the Missionary Rooms. Another valuable missionary is gone to his reward: he leaves a widow and four children. Cannot I do something for their relief? Inspire me, O my God! with wisdom and courage to commence and digest a plan, adapted to this object, which would relieve the funds of the Parent Society, allay the fears and anxieties of our missionaries respecting the future circumstances of their widows and children, and lead to the training of their sons for that glorious work, in which their pious fathers sacrificed health and life."

We shall close this year of suffering and discipline, with the following remarks:—

Dec. 31, 1820.—"This world is indeed a barren wilderness, yielding no refreshing fruit, or springs of living comfort. Had not our God promised to

guide and take care of us, we should have lost our way, and fainted under the pressure of affliction and temptation; but, the eternal God is our refuge, and His everlasting arms are underneath us. We have our bread from heaven, and our water is sure. In those streams of living water, we may wash and be clean; of this bread, we may eat every day and be satisfied. Besides the bread and water of life for our supply, we have, in the wilderness, the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. What these were to the Jews of old, the Word and Spirit are to the Christian pilgrim. Thus hath the Lord led me, and once more would I say, Ebenezer! I have been near to Jordan, and must soon pass over; my passage is still delayed, but I am sure the message will come: it may be soon; it may be suddenly. Whether I shall find the waters deep or shallow, agitated or tranquil, I know not. Help me, O Lord, to say, when I step in, *This God is our God for ever and ever!* Let me not, then, think so much of the passage over the river, as of the glorious things which are beyond it. There stands the New Jerusalem, the city of the living God; there I shall join the spirits of the just men made perfect; there is the new paradise, in which stands the tree of life. Why, then, do I mind these terrestrial things? Why do I still cleave to this land of darkness and vanity? 'O for the wings of faith to rise!' and, in the blest anticipation of all this glory, let me cry, *Why are thy chariot wheels so long in coming?—O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?*

Yes! *Death shall be swallowed up in victory. This mortal shall put on immortality; this corruption shall put on incorruption.*"

The foe, which had attacked the citadel, and had been repulsed, did not relinquish his purpose, but pursued the soul through every avenue of life, till he succeeded in laying low the venerable structure which bent to fall. The illness of this year was never recovered; but the mind rose in its energies, and heavenly principles triumphed over the pains of mortality, and the feebleness of sinking nature. For a few quotations from the diary, in proof of these assertions, the reader is referred to the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

Exertions in behalf of the Irish Evangelical Society, &c.

January 1, 1821.—"On this day commences another portion of my time. Ought I to allow it to pass without recording the goodness of my God to me and mine during the past year? Blessings and sufferings have been ours; bereavements, sickness, recovery. Shall we not, with David, sing of mercy and judgment? Shall I not recal the interposition of that God, who heals our diseases, and who has restored me to health, at least, in a degree sufficient to enable me to prosecute my delightful employ of publishing to others the power and the grace of our Saviour? During my illness, I was favoured with the knowledge that my ministry had been useful. I must continue to preach the same truths, to look up to God for his blessing, and to press upon my own recollection, and on that of my dear people, the absolute necessity of the Spirit's agency, to render sermons useful and effectual for salvation. Mine, honoured by God as they have been, are destitute of all ingenuity and external ornament. One feature only to recommend them—they consist of Scripture truths, expressed and urged with freedom and warmth.

Yes, I am more and more convinced, that it is the naked sword of the Spirit, which pierces the heart. The sword may be decorated and ornamented with the trappings of human oratory, and may thus be more pleasing to the intelligent and refined parts of society, but these accompaniments will add nothing to its power. Let me then continue as long as I am able, to study, to pray, and to preach, and leave the issue to Him, who does more for us than we can either ask or think."

"Some excellent remarks, in a recent discussion upon diaries, have made me carefully review my motives for continuing this journal. Having so done, I have decided to perpetuate, for the benefit of my children and grand-children, a memorial of the goodness of God. I find also, that a daily record of particular events, and active duties, induces gratitude and watchfulness; while, from communion with my own heart, I obtain humbling views of myself, and a deeper sense of the purity and holiness of an omniscient God."

Jan. 3.—"Indisposed, and would gladly have remained in my beloved study, but was obliged to go to London to attend a special committee of the directors of the Missionary Society, to arrange the plan of schools, at the Cape and in India, for the children of missionaries. In the evening, met, in my own vestry, the gentlemen who were to balance the accounts for repairs. Great was our joy and gratitude on finding that we had succeeded to raise nearly 1200*l.* in less than two years."

Jan. 7.—"Yesterday was a trying day, but was able to preach three sermons and administer the

Lord's Supper. The unchangeable priesthood of our Saviour was my theme. The glory, the efficacy, and the perpetuity of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, is the glory of Scripture, the ground of salvation, and the hope of eternal life to perishing sinners."

10.—"Rose this morning languid and ill; sent for a coach, being unable to go by stage; went to the Deaf and Dumb election; the day was fatiguing. Returned home earlier than usual, filled with gratitude that I was able to render some little assistance to that valuable and useful Institution. Two of my early and zealous coadjutors in that good cause, have in the last year finished their labour, and gone to their rest. I must soon follow; but I desire to work whilst it is day, knowing that the night cometh, in which no man can work. My gracious Benefactor has done much for me; all I can do for Him, for His cause, and for His poor, is much too little."

11.—"Went yesterday morning to London, to obtain the pension of a poor widow from the India House. Returned, and commenced my weekly visits among the sick and poor members of my church. In the evening, preached the weekly lecture. My mind was anxious for the welfare of souls wandering from the paths of truth and holiness, but I had little pleasure in speaking. Feelings, however, are not the proper criteria of usefulness; pain and restlessness, the preceding night, had produced much debility in body, and weariness in spirit."

Jan. 12.—"Rose with less pain and difficulty in

breathing. After the devotional exercises of the morning, wrote letters, and went to the Bank to receive dividends for the Deaf and Dumb; from thence to Homerton, to attend the committee of the Old College. Assisted at the examination of two candidates for admission. They appear promising young men. May they prove learned and faithful ministers of Christ! Returned home to prayer-meeting, and afterwards visited a sick friend.

25.—"Called to-day on a friend, to converse on the state of the Widows' Fund. We discussed some important topics, with a view to increase its revenue, and to extend its usefulness, and are to meet again respecting this important subject, which I long to assist before my season of labour finally closes. This, I have reason to think, will be soon; and yet, thinking so, may I not exclaim,

'Why is my heart so far from Thee,
My God, my chief delight?
Why are my thoughts no more by day
With Thee, no more by night?'

In the evening, preached at Orange-Street. A letter from Mr. G—— informed me of his child's death. I sympathized with him, well remembering my own feelings when I lost my dear ——; but I have had reason to be thankful, and to acknowledge the mercy, that removed my little lamb to the fold above."

Jan. 28.—"Blessed be God for the preservation of the past night, and for the light of a day sacred

to the interests of the soul, and the things of a better world. May all my thoughts and all my desires harmonize with the holy character of this holy day; and whilst I preach to others, may I grow in grace, and make progress towards the New Jerusalem! I desire to be more fully acquainted with its glory, more powerfully assured of my interest in it, and more desirous of entering into the possession of it."

Feb. 2.—"Rose with pain in the side, and considerable oppression in the chest. In the morning, prepared tracts and essays for publication; in the afternoon, visited the sick and dying; in the evening, attended the prayer-meeting."

3.—"Another Sabbath is gone, and I have preached three sermons. Grant, O Lord, that I may be thankful for the assistance Thou hast afforded Thy unworthy servant, and that Thy Spirit and blessing may attend Thy ministers and Thy churches!"

4.—"Attended the printing committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the general committee at twelve. Some of the letters read were of the most encouraging description. This glorious object is taking possession, with renewed vigour, of the understandings and the consciences of the wise and good. New translations into languages in which the holy Scriptures have never been printed, are fast increasing; and the day, we hope, is not far distant, when the Christian world shall hail their distribution in every country under the canopy of Heaven. In the evening, attended the missionary prayer-meet-

ing in Union-Street. Grieved was I to find so small an attendance: twelve ministers in the district, and only five attended at this post of duty."

Feb. 5.—"Last night very restless; cough and breath worse than usual. Was desirous of calling to recollection some spiritual subjects, but found wanderings and stupor pervade my mind. The following lines, however, opened a train of thought and feeling, suited to the hour of pain and restlessness:—

'In darkest watches of the night,
I'll count thy mercies o'er,
I'll praise thy Name for mercies past,
And humbly sue for more.'"

April 2.—"Had yesterday a severe day's service: preached three times, and administered the Lord's Supper. Determined my sermons should be short; but my prudence and resolution were overcome by my anxiety to give a full statement on the three following texts:—Col. i. 2; 1 John i. 7; Ephes. ii. 8, 9. I was extremely fatigued, and my chest painful; but can we spend health and life in a more honourable or useful employ, than that of endeavouring to exalt the Redeemer? It is delightful to meditate on, and speak of, the concerns of His kingdom."

16.—"This day has been passed in London. Went to the Missionary Society at eleven; to the Audit of the Deaf and Dumb at one; and to the committee of the Congregational School at five. Returned at seven, and visited some members of the church. Much pain in the side, and general

debility: am strongly admonished of the approach of the last enemy; the whole tabernacle totters to its foundation, and is hastening to the decay exhibited in the 12th chapter of Ecclesiastes. I long to think, feel, and act as one just stepping into Eternity."

June 6.—"Had a sad night, but determined to fight against languor and weakness. Went to London to meet the auditors of the Evangelical Magazine; from thence to Lewisham, to meet the sub-committee of the Congregational School."

July 9.—"This is the day of our half-yearly election for the Deaf and Dumb. If I listen to the voice of prudence and affection, I should absent myself from the bustle and anxiety necessarily produced; but I cannot resist the call of friends, to assist them in the election of children, for whom they are much interested.

Evening.—"Have passed through the fatigues of the election much better than I expected, considering the inflamed state of the arm in which I was bled. After obtaining the list of successful candidates, returned home, weary in body, but cheerful in spirit, and, I hope, thankful to see how wonderfully God has prospered that Institution, which was begun with three names as annual subscribers. It has now nearly 8000 on the books; some of the candidates had more than 5000 votes."

The above selections have been given from Mr. Townsend's diary; but they present a very imperfect view of his labours, which still continued, notwithstanding the entreaties of friends, and the injunctions of his medical attendant. In July he went

to Hastings, where he derived some benefit, but his complaints were never subdued, they were only mitigated.

Aug. 17.—" Had a restless night, and feel some forebodings of my malady increasing, and that faith and patience will be tried by pain and debility; but let me remember it is the hand of God, and pray for grace to suffer, and do, all that the Lord shall please to appoint. It will be a blessing if my complaint should be so far moderated, as to admit of a continuance of ministerial labours, and attendance upon the Institutions with which I am connected, and I am also anxious to finish some of the numerous essays, and religious tracts, which I have begun, and which require little more than transcribing and arranging. The greater part of the materials is completed, and if finished, they might be useful, when my head is laid in the silent grave."

Oct. 5.—" Considerable pain in my chest, with an overwhelming lassitude, but having several sick and aged persons to visit, must rouse myself. O Lord, give me strength and spirits for every day's duties and trials: alas! why should I talk of trials? I have none; all is mercy and kindness; my cup is full as to earthly comforts; my trials are an infirm debilitated body, and a mind that cannot reach the high attainments of abstractedness from earthly objects, but cannot I say?

'Our God how firm his promise stands,
E'en when he hides his face;
He trusts in our Redeemer's hands
His glory and his grace.'

"The stability of God's covenant, and the truth and certainty of God's promise, form the only solid ground of the Christian's peace and comfort; his own feelings vary and fluctuate so much, that no dependence can be placed upon them. Light and darkness, joy and sorrow, succeed each other, and the mind can rest only in the covenant and promises of the Mediator."

Oct. 30.—"Scarcely able to walk, from debility and oppression in the chest. Attended the printing committee of the Bible Society, and the committee of the Missionary Society; also the committee of the Protestant Society, to consider the principles and provisions of Mr. Brougham's Education Bill."

In the spring and summer of 1822, the health of our valuable friend was free from the violent attacks of the two preceding years, and its improvement induced him, in the autumn, to form part of a deputation to Ireland. His family much opposed this exertion, as they feared not only the effects of travelling, but anticipated that, in crossing the Irish channel, he might rupture a vessel on the lungs; but duty seemed to call him to this service, and he could not resist the summons. In the Irish Evangelical Society, he had taken a deep interest from its commencement, and circumstances had arisen which required energy and zeal. Two veterans were selected on this occasion, the Rev. M. Wilks, and the Rev. J. Townsend, who were to be accompanied by Mr. Walker, the treasurer of the society. A quotation from the diary, will prove the characteristic warmth and activity, which existed before the decision was made.

August 6.—"What reason have I to be thankful to God, that my ministry is still acceptable and useful. To be useful is the highest privilege and blessing; popularity, honour, wealth, are all nothing; but to win souls to Christ, and train them up for heaven, is a service which angels would deem honourable. Is it not, however, necessary that I should relinquish travelling for public societies, and, as much as possible, confine myself to light and home duty? Yet I cannot lay aside the most honourable and delightful service, in which a human being can suffer. It is the cause of God; and it is for the salvation of immortal souls; it is that cause in which many eminent reformers and martyrs willingly died, not counting their lives dear to them, that they might finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they had received of the Lord Jesus Christ."

A few extracts from letters written during a rapid journey of eleven days, may not be uninteresting to the reader.

"*Birmingham, Sept.* 10, 1822.

"My very dear C———

"We arrived here at eight o'clock this evening, my fatigue not so great as I had feared. The coach passed through Leamington and Warwick, and it was with pleasure I contemplated the interesting scenes through which our dear E—— had recently wandered. Mr. Wilks being engaged to preach for the Missionary Society tomorrow evening, I think it probable that Mr. Walker and myself will proceed.

"Sept. 11.—When I returned last night to my solitary room, all seemed cold and dreary; I heard a whisper of 'Sweet Home, Sweet Home!' however, I was much consôled by the recollection that you were in the company of old and kind friends, whom you love, and who would, by their solicitude, mitigate your grief at our temporary

separation. After committing your dear self and family to the care and blessing of God, I retired to bed, and had a tolerable night's rest.

"Rose this morning at six; was disposed to sleep longer, but the lines of the poet determined me to resist the inclination;

'Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings,
Thy better portion trace;
Rise from transitory things,
Towards Heav'n thy native place.'

"Left my room at seven, intending to purchase an inkstand, but on entering the first street from the inn, came to a spacious and handsome chapel, which I thought might probably be one of the new churches; finding it open, I entered and saw a platform already raised, with one solitary individual on it, and fearing he was left to bear the burden of the service, I felt it a duty to volunteer my assistance. An excellent and devout prayer was offered by Mr. Brook, who wrote the lives of the Puritans. He requested me to give an exhortation, and to conclude in prayer, to which I consented, and at the breaking up of the meeting, I was surrounded by a little host of ministers and friends. Invitations to breakfast followed, but supposing Mr. W—— would wonder at my absence, I returned to the inn, and so completely lost myself in Missionary subjects, that I forgot to purchase an inkstand, which had been my object in this early walk. Mr. W—— is come, and, laughing at my letter, says, 'You are writing very soon.' At eleven o'clock we leave here for Shrewsbury, except a kind of press-warrant should forcibly detain us, of which I have my fears, but shall do my utmost to escape, as my strength will not allow of travelling to-morrow night."

"*Shrewsbury, Wednesday Night.*

"Just arrived from Birmingham, and, as we start to-morrow morning at 5 o'clock, I write to prevent any anxiety.

"I left Birmingham without seeing Mr. and Mrs. J—— being unable to reach their house: some expressed surprise at my leaving, but I felt satisfied it was my duty.

"We travelled with an Irish lady and gentleman, who were friends of Bible Societies, Religious Tract Societies, and especially

of the Hibernian School Society. Of the poor Irish Evangelical Academy, they knew nothing. To me, this is a strong proof that little or no efforts are made on the other side, to make it known or to extend its benefits; of course it is time that it was either given up, or made more efficient and useful."

"*Holyhead, Thursday*, 9 *o'clock.*

"Being yet without pen and ink, must correspond in pencil. I have retired to converse with you, my dearest earthly object, and also with Him, who is, I hope, dear to us both, committing myself, you, and all our beloved circle, to His protection, who has dealt so mercifully with us and ours through so many years. Let us often call upon our souls, and all that is within us, to praise His holy name.

"I have been delighted to day with my journey. The scenes of romantic grandeur—falls of water over rocks of the most picturesque kind, immense hills, beautiful vallies, especially those through which rapid streams of water meander among the broken rocks, the white surf, visible through the various trees which grow upon the banks, while the sound which falls upon the ear, is more enchanting to me than the finest music.

"We crossed the Bangor Ferry in about ten minutes, and rode through the Isle of Anglesea, which is as flat and dull, as North Wales is delightful and enchanting.

"I am fatigued, but my health not worse than when I left home. The wind is fair, and the weather promising, but these and all earthly things are precarious; not so the things which are spiritual and heavenly; they are eternal, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

"*Dublin, Friday*, 4 *o'clock.*

"Just arrived, after a pleasant passage of seven hours and a half. Breeze only sufficient to facilitate our crossing, without any degree of inconvenience from the motion of the vessel: this was favourable to so indifferent a sailor as myself.

"Lord and Lady D—— were among the passengers. It was pleasant to see the kind attention the former paid to his Lady and family: what a blessing would it be, if all the nobility were of the same domestic character!

"The scenes around me are of the most novel kind—splendid buildings, spacious streets; but, alas! what poverty, what rags, meet the eye in every direction; and the destitution of clothing is terrible. On entering the hotel in Sackville-street, I was much disappointed at not receiving a letter from you. We have already had invitations, but shall have no time to spare. I am fixed for three sermons."

"*Dublin, Sept.* 14.

"I have had a tranquil night, and risen much refreshed and invigorated. O that the strength I have, may be spent in the service of God, and for the good of immortal souls. Time is short: I would that every inch of it might be employed in the spread of divine truth. Blessed Jesus, take to Thyself Thy great power, and reign over all worlds, and in all hearts, and especially in mine; let every thought and purpose be sacred to Thee!

"We have received many invitations, and all here unite in condemning my hasty return; but the business done for the Irish Evangelical Society, and I delay no longer. The necessity of our coming is evident, and I hope the result will prove highly beneficial to the Institution, and ultimately tend to the increase of pure religion in this dark benighted country, where darkness and superstition reign, in all their horrors. O may the light and power of the Spirit be effectual in their dispersion!"

"*Dublin, Sept.* 15.

"Weary and tired with the labours of the day, I write hastily to say that this will be my last letter from hence, and that I hope to be with you at Reading on the 21st, and also to fulfil my pulpit engagements for the following day. Again no letter from you.—What can be the reason? I console myself with the recollection that hope deferred makes the heart sick, yet when the desired good comes, it is the sweeter.

"I shall leave Ireland, with feelings of gratitude that my lot is cast in England; but this sentiment will, I hope, induce deeper sympathy with this benighted land. I long much to see you again: how many days will elapse? only six. How soon will these be gone! Ah! how soon will the whole of our days be numbered, when the place that knew us shall know us no more for ever.

Well, let these days of mortality fly away; are they not dull, dark, and winterly days? and will they not be succeeded by one long, one bright, one peaceful day; a day without clouds or storms; a day, over which the shades of night shall no more be drawn?

"Yours till death."

On the 1st of October, Mr. Townsend was informed, by letter, of Mr. Owen's death. The sentiment produced was deep and solemn. Not only was the invaluable and laborious secretary deplored, but the friend of fifty years; with whom associations of early life had been mingled, which had given, to the more solid attachment of after years, a tenderness ever increasing by the worth of its object. In the diary are the remarks which follow:

"How mysterious are the ways of Providence! The Bible Society has lost the most important and useful of its agents; but we must indulge no murmuring,—there must be no questioning either the wisdom, the goodness, or the justice of the divine government in the management of the great concerns of the Redeemer's kingdom. All power in heaven, and on earth, is His. We may say with the Prophet, 'My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof,'—but the great work in which we are engaged, in the cause of God and of truth, is under the direction and influence of His Holy Spirit, and must, and will, prosper. Never was there an agent more calculated for the work in which he was engaged than the much lamented John Owen; but the God who gave him his intellect and energy,

has the residue of the Spirit. May the committee be guided in the selection of a successor! Many who are most desirable and suitable, will shrink from the arduous services the station demands, and the deep responsibility which it involves. Physical and mental strength are essentially necessary, and the temper must be the most cool and placid. The great man we have lost, fell a victim to the intense ardour of his gigantic mind, which was too powerful for his frame. Fifty years have passed away, since Mr. Owen and myself were led by our excellent fathers, to worship under the roof of the despised Tabernacle, where we sat near each other. May we not have been greatly indebted to that Whitfield, whose glorious and successful labours still leave an impression of their power and extent?"

On the 7th of October, Mr. Townsend preached a sermon for Cheshunt College; he esteemed every Institution of this kind, as a fountain from whence flowed the pure streams of sound learning, with a knowledge of scriptural theology, sending to the world, not merely classical scholars, but able ministers. These schools of the Prophets ever came within the objects of his duty. Half the night appears to have been devoted to the preparation of this discourse, which was from 1 Tim. iii. 1. Mr. T. thought that this College did not receive sufficient assistance from the wealthy members of the connexion to which it belonged, who seemed to forget that the reputation, growth, and stability of a large portion of the community, were dependent on the prosperity of this establishment. He

endeavoured to impress on the minds of his hearers, the claims of Him, who, giving the blessing of both worlds to them, demanded in return the sacrifice of their personal and domestic comforts, if necessary, to the promotion of His universal dominion. On the day following this exertion, Mr. T. was menaced with a return of his former complaint, which induced the resolution of declining any *extra* service during the ensuing winter. He writes—"Cough returned, with pain in the side; my frame languishes, and will ere long be dissolved; time shortens, and he on the pale horse will soon be at my door. I would be ready—I would be watching; above all, I would be working, as one who must give an account of his stewardship."

November 7th, we find the following entry:—"Went yesterday afternoon to the Sunday School Tract Society, of Orange-street. The annual report detailed the extent and energy which attended the operations of this committee, and excited universal surprise. They have visited between three and four thousand families; the jails, hospitals, workhouses, and barracks in the neighbourhood. Rarely has so much good seed been sown by so few hands, and in so short a time. It having been widely circulated, and as generally believed, that the Religious Tract Society originated in the Bible Society, I will here leave for my children, a statement of the true and legitimate descent of the most important Institutions of these times.

1st. The London Missionary Society.

2ndly. The Religious Tract Society.

3rdly. The British and Foreign Bible Society.

From the London Missionary Society also sprang,

1st. The Hibernian Society.

2ndly. The Irish Evangelical Society.

3rdly. The Society for the Conversion of the Jews.

4thly. The Church Missionary Society.

"Unworthy as I am of being so distinguished, may I never cease to be grateful to God that I have had the honour and felicity of taking part in the origin, progress, and final success of these great and prosperous Institutions.* Their utility and prosperity are the subjects of admiration and praise, even to those who have censured agents in them, for devoting themselves too much to Public Societies. O that my children, and my children's children, may ever befriend the cause of Missions! God greatly honoured your grandfather by permitting him to be one of the nine ministers who first met to form the London Missionary Society, and may none of his descendants forsake or slight it! When I look at my numerous grandchildren, and think how variously they may be situated in life, the prayer of the Psalmist for the youth of Israel is mine for them. *That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth, that our daughters may be as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace.* I

* The Church Missionary Society excepted.

wish them to know and remember this, when I am laid in the silent grave,—may they become sincere Christians, that we may meet in our Father's house above!"

Mr. Townsend having preached a sermon for a school of Industry in the vicinity of London, from 2 Cor. viii. 9,—*For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich,*—received the following short, but impressive letter, containing an anonymous donation:—

"Ah! for my sake He became poor, that I, through His poverty, might be made rich. My silver and gold shall be His; and what give I but of His own?"

The year 1823 was marked by the same alternations as the preceding; but, in its last three months, our friend's health and spirits were much shaken by his efforts to rescue an innocent and important character, from the effects of slanderous and malevolent reports. His native sense of justice induced him to proceed in this matter upon the great maxim, so essential an element in our laws, "never to believe a man guilty of a crime till convicted upon the clearest evidence." Acting on this principle, he brought all the vigour of his mind, and exerted his constitutional firmness, to aid one, whom he believed much injured. Wearisome days, and sleepless nights, were the effects of this exertion; and, though frequently fearing his health would sink under such painful anxieties, he still persevered, till a long investigation had established

the complete innocence of the injured individual. In the course of this affair, he writes,—

December.—"Had a good night's rest, compared with many of late. I believe it has arisen from my mind being more composed, hoping, as I do, that the business of—— will end favourably, and that he will be restored to peace in his own mind, and to the confidence and good opinion of others."

The year 1824 was ushered in with much indisposition. Mr. Townsend says,—"My mind and body both feel the chilling influence of winter. O that I could feel the higher enjoyments of religion in a larger measure, and could obtain more lively communion with God! A small addition to my present maladies, will break the golden bowl, and loose the silver cord." But the thread of life was not yet to snap,—more suffering, more duty, more patience, were to be exemplified in this eminent Christian. The feeble body was not yet to be gathered to his fathers; the spirit was to be trained for a still more glorious mansion in the realms of light. Who can tell what may have been the effect of sermons, preached under the influence of pain and disease, and with an impression that the realities of the eternal world might open on his spirit before the close? and such were all his later discourses.

The diary annexed to this sketch will be the best portraiture of both external duty and internal feeling—but even there we fail, as the half yet remains to be told. The duty was daily—it was monotonous—and the reader would weary in its sameness, though he might be edified by the exhi-

bition of the holy principles, which induced the unwearied zeal that braved weather the most trying to his infirmities, and overcame every obstacle that impeded his benevolent wishes.

In July we find him at Reading, whither he had gone to preach on three Sabbaths. To this town he was much attached, from the peculiar friendliness of the residents. While there, he was seized with an acute and alarming disease, and on the morning of the Sunday found himself very ill, but was determined to conceal his bodily anguish. Aware of the dangerous nature of the malady, he summoned no medical attendant till after his last sermon; when, hastening quickly home, he sent for a surgeon, who found him in much danger, and who could scarcely believe that the sufferer he was called in to relieve, was the minister who had delivered a sermon of an hour's length. But if the indifferent spectator had been thus deceived, the watchful eye of affection had seen the pallid cheek, and remarked the sinking form as it fell back, almost fainting, after the work was accomplished. We will give the details as written, to record the goodness of Him who preserved in that time also.

"Yesterday was a day never to be forgotten. Disease had been gradually increasing, and after my morning sermon I was very ill, and pain became great; but I knew that if medical advice were called in, preaching would be prohibited. In the afternoon I again performed pulpit duty, and had a deeper sense of obligation to a Redeemer, more love to His person, and greater fervour

in proclaiming His glory, His love, and His sufferings for guilty man. Thinking I should soon give an account of my labours to God, I was resolved to make a last effort in the Saviour's cause, and in the evening should have taken the text, *There is but a step between me and death*,—but my wife and daughter were present, and I feared the effect on them. My pain and torture were such, that I could scarcely keep up my recollection. On my return home the agony became excruciating, and I was stupified with pain."

To the active skill, the unremitting attention, the kind solicitude, of the medical friend who subdued the malady under which Mr. Townsend then suffered, his family here pay their tribute of grateful and continued remembrance.

As time shortened, and eternity advanced, our venerable friend felt all his responsibilities increasing. Heaven was the object full in view, and thither he wished to conduct souls, whose value he daily estimated at a higher price. Thus we find him in the pulpit, and at committees, when a less ardent spirit would have yielded to the commands of the physician, the solicitations of friends, and the exhaustions of nature. A few passages from the diary, in this his last year of duty and service, may not be uninteresting to those who knew him.

January 17, 1825.—"Preached three times yesterday: a tranquil night enabled me to meet the duty and pleasure of attending the Bible Committee this morning. At four o'clock went to the Missionary committee of tours, to express my

desire of being released from an engagement to visit Plymouth, Cornwall, &c., pleading the bad state of my health: at five attended the meeting of the directors; went from thence, at six, to the committee of the Congregational School."

January 31st.—"Yesterday preached three times: in the evening my sermon exceeded the hour; forgot to watch the clock. But, really, how can we count minutes, and mark the hand of a time-piece, when we are anxious to awaken souls from sin and death, and persuade them to come to a Saviour, for salvation and eternal life. If we had the Apostle's spirit and temper, we should rise more above the cold and chilling influence of prudence and self-preservation. I would be willing to devote the last atom of my strength to the publication of the Gospel, and pray to be more imbued with the love of immortal souls. O Lord! arise; shine upon every department of Thy church, and let there be great joy in heaven and on earth, for the conversion of sinners and the prosperity of Thy redeemed people.

February 26th.—"To-morrow's duties are heavy; but I will retire to rest, hoping to find refreshing sleep, that my strength may be renewed. O Lord! mercifully grant that, out of my weakness, Thy strength may be perfected. Let the services of the ensuing Sabbath be greatly blessed; and if this pain and weakness are the precursors to a closing of my ministerial labours, forgive all my past infirmities, and help me, as I pass over Jordan, to say, *O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!* But, if the triumph of faith

is not to be mine, let me lean on Thy mighty arm, and feel the support Thou hast promised to those who love and trust Thee."

March 24th.—"I have this day reached the age of sixty-eight. With what seriousness of spirit, and with what feelings of humility and regret, do I call to remembrance my many and great offences against the God of my father, the God of my mercies, the God whose protection and goodness have followed me for so many years. I have been indulged by divine Providence far beyond all my expectations; but, oh! the insensibility, the forgetfulness, and the ingratitude of my heart! O that I could recover time and wasted seasons! Opportunities of doing good have been too much slighted; and my soul has lived at a distance from God, forgetting the blessings He has bestowed on me. O that I might have more zeal, more usefulness, more faith, and more love. If eternal life rested upon my innate virtue, or any works of righteousness which I have done, I should utterly despair. I know it is the gift of God through the blessed Redeemer, discovered and appropriated by the Holy Spirit working faith in the soul. I entreat for that faith, I pray to be prepared, and desire to hail the hour of my departure with confidence and joy; yet I feel nature recoiling,—the weakness of faith very prevailing. There are times when my soul is so deeply penetrated with a sense of the holiness and majesty of God, and with the mysterious and solemn aspect of the eternal world, that I am ready to exclaim with the prophet,—*Woe is me! for I am undone; because*

I am a man of unclean lips. Isaiah vi. 5 ; and with Job, xlii. 5 and 6,—*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear ; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.—Quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word ; for my soul cleaveth to the dust.* Lead my thoughts more to death and eternity. May I join the happy society of those dear parents, whose excellent instructions, and earnest prayers to God for my salvation, have laid me under obligations never to be cancelled."

May 11.—"Another general meeting of the Missionary Society has gladdened my heart, and I would say, surely the time, *the set time to favour Zion is come;* facilities for spreading the Gospel have increased, with an eagerness to receive instruction. Never did the field of the world wear a more pleasing and inviting aspect. The heathen, the Mahometan, and the Roman Catholic countries seem to cry, *Come over and help us.* I have seen the return of this meeting of the tribes with gratitude ; probably this will be the last at which I shall assist. Daily am I expecting some powerful attack will carry me into eternity. Father of my spirit ! enlighten, warm, purify, this cold and wretched heart of mine : fill it with heavenly desires ; help me to set my affections more upon Thee and on eternal things ! "

19. — "Left London for Newport Pagnell, where I was to preach the anniversary sermon for the Academy. With great kindness my friends there received my feeble efforts, and mentioned with pleasure a discourse I had delivered

twelve years since. They wished to have it printed, and would have guaranteed me from all expense; but to this I could not consent."

May 30.—"A restless night has much indisposed me for the heavy day's work before me; but God is all-sufficient, and will give me strength, while I willingly devote that, and my time, to His cause and to works of humanity. May I be looking inward to the state of my own soul, forward, to the valley of the shadow of death, and upward, to the glory promised and secured to all who love and trust in our Redeemer."

And the soul was daily ripening, the faith was soon to be exercised in the valley, and the glory was shortly to be entered upon. In July the reluctant invalid was forced from his duties, to quiet and inactivity. He went to Hastings, where he writes:—

"My spirit is overwhelmed within me, but I can lift up my eyes to the Rock of ages, and implore grace and strength to meet my hours of pain and sleeplessness. In knowledge and faith I am still a mere child; but I long to be absorbed in spiritual and eternal things, and to have my mind moulded after the image of my dear Redeemer, that I may be penetrated with the sublime views of the heaven where He reigns—there, no sleep will be needed, because our bodies shall be fashioned like unto his own glorious body; even his, who is the resurrection and the life."

Hastings. Sabbath-day, August 29.—"Did not leave the cottage yesterday, but made some addition to the skeletons of sermons which I have

commenced. To-day have preached to a serious and attentive auditory, as if I had neither disease nor debility. With earnestness and fidelity I addressed the people, feeling it would be the last time, and urging the necessity of preparing for that eternity, in which days, and months, and years will be reckoned no more. I told them we were most probably taking our last farewell on earth, as my age and state of health offered little probability of my surviving the winter; and that I drew all my hope, peace, and comfort, from the atonement, righteousness, and intercession of Christ. Mr. D—— read, and engaged in prayer. As I sat in the vestry my agitation was extreme, fearing I should be unable to complete my engagement; but my attentive friend had placed for me a seat in the pulpit, and thus enabled me to bear another testimony to the love and power of a Saviour."

Sept. 3.—"On this day, bade a final farewell to Hastings. How sweet, how delightful is home! What pleasure I anticipate in again seeing my congregation, in the employment of prayer and praise! O Lord, meet with us! grant that, on the morrow, we may have a foretaste of the meeting of the whole Church at the marriage supper of the Lamb! O happy hour; O blest abode!"

CHAPTER XI.

Conduct in the Prospect of speedy Dissolution. His Death.

AUTUMN of 1825.—Retirement from public duties, with the bracing and invigorating air of the sea, had this year failed in producing their ordinary beneficial effects, and Mr. Townsend appears to have returned home with a conviction that nature was soon to be dissolved. In September and October he went to the College at Wymondley, where, on the latter visit, he was so much indisposed, that an immediate return to London was considered necessary; but a sermon had been promised in a neighbouring town, and he determined on fulfilling the engagement. He left on the following morning at six o'clock, and on his arrival at home, was menaced with the rupture of a vessel on the lungs. To prevent this, he was bled on that, and on the succeeding day; which, with other remedies, averted the threatened attack; but the breaches made in the citadel were daily widening, and every repulse grew feebler.

In November, Mr. Townsend re-commenced public duties. On the 10th of that month he met, for the last time, the ministers of the Congregational Board; and on the evening of the same day, he preached at Orange-street, and on

the 11th, at Hackney. On the 13th he delivered three sermons, and on Monday, the 14th, we find him at various committees.

On Monday, November the 21st, he attended a general committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, praying earnestly, before he left home, that God would give wisdom to the decisions of that day, that a spirit of calmness and moderation might pervade their counsels, and that all present might act as became Christians, who professed to be influenced by the precepts of that holy Book, which it was their united object to circulate.

But this variety and extent of exertion tended to exhaust the little remaining strength of our venerable friend, who frequently reposed all night in his chair, his malady allowing him very little sleep. On the 26th of November, he was again bled to reduce inflammation, and on the 27th he preached two sermons; after which he writes: "My public ministry will soon close, and I fear I must yield to the doctrine, so long and earnestly urged upon me, 'Spare thyself;' but I shall not submit without another struggle. Necessity only shall lead me to abandon my pulpit and my study. I have much reason to record the goodness of God, especially in granting me a calm and resigned state of mind, more spiritualized, and enlightened with the hope and prospect of that blessedness which will be the portion of all who believe in Christ. Affliction is a school, in which many important and profitable lessons are to be learned; but I am a dull scholar, and need line upon line, and precept upon precept. O for a larger measure of wisdom and grace, that I

may be more anxious for the glory of God, the spread of pure and unadulterated truth, and the conversion of immortal souls! How mean, how insignificant, are all pursuits compared with this!"

There was little cessation of service in December; in the early part of which, a physician had been called in, whose prescriptions had relieved some of the worst symptoms. Mental vigour and religious principle, carried him through the duties of that month. On the 29th he preached, for the last time, at Fetter Lane: the subject a favourite one—Practical Religion—the text appropriate, Matt. vii. 20. On the 30th he delivered a sermon at the Adelphi, from Matt. xxi. 22; the auditory were unusually attentive, and the impression left on his own mind was that of hope and pleasure.

We are now approaching the last scenes of life—scenes, ever most interesting to survivors, and whose details are sought with avidity. Affection would catch the last look; friendship would treasure up in memory the last sentence. We cannot follow the spirit of those who wing their flight to unknown and untried worlds; but we like to descend into the valley with them,—we linger on the shore, and anxiously watch their passage over the river. Such scenes are opening to us; but ere we record them, we must tell of Christian principles, evidenced by sermons delivered when the preacher was, in fact, a dying man. In January, Mr. Townsend preached on the first four sabbaths—twice on each; he also performed all his other pastoral duties, and attended most of the committees. On Thursday, the 19th, he offi-

ciated at Orange-street; and on Sunday, the 22nd, delivered his last sermon there, and at Jamaica-row, from the text, *Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.*

On the Saturday evening previous, his daughter had observed symptoms which told her that the last hours were rapidly approaching. With all the solicitude of affection, she implored him not to preach on the morrow; but the father's ruling passion was love to the souls of men, and this, strong even in death, prevailed over every consideration of prudence. So decided was her conviction of her parent's real danger, that she passed the night without sleep. On the Monday morning, his usual medical friend was summoned; who, on leaving him, said "Never have I seen Mr. Townsend so ill." Distressing symptoms rapidly increased, and all gave signs that the over-taxed frame would, ere long, dislodge the "tenant soul." Now were the humility, patience, and resignation of this eminent servant of God in full exercise. The self-abasement which had attended him through his long and useful life, was most conspicuous, together with a deeper sense of the purity and holiness of God. These are sentiments, that generally attend the Christian, who has long held communion with the majesty of a holy Being, and contemplated with attentive scrutiny his own internal corruptions. It is not that faith is weaker, or that he does not see the glory and all-sufficiency of Him who died to save those who believe in Him; but that long contemplation of that which is holy, gives an emphasis to penitential feeling, which increases as

the soul waits to be delivered from its *body of sin and death.*

Thus it was with our venerable friend; his humility deepened, while his hopes were within the veil, and his soul was sustained by that peace which is perfect. The hovering shades at the entrance of the dark valley did not appal him, for it was irradiated by the beams of the Sun of righteousness.

There was no dependence upon past duties; all hopes of salvation rested upon the atonement of a Saviour, and the immutability of divine love. He was overwhelmed with regret that he had done so little for God; the rectitude of his conduct, the purity of his motives, were mourned over as defective. On a minister recalling to him the prospect of meeting those in heaven, to whom he had been useful while on earth, he replied, "I hope so." The same friend mentioning to him the promised crown as waiting for him, he exclaimed, "It is well for me that it is a blood-bought crown, or I could never expect to wear it." His resignation during attacks of pain was remarkable; in a conversation with his eldest daughter on the subject, he concluded with the following lines:—

"Whate'er thy sov'reign will ordains,
O give me strength to bear;
And let me know a Father reigns,
Nor doubt a Father's care."

He said to a young friend, who was soon to enter on the Christian ministry, "The promises of God are my support, they are *yea and amen in Christ Jesus.* I have no extatic joy, but I have a

sure hope and peace in God." On being reminded of the numerous persons to whom his ministry had been useful, he said, "Yes, I am thankful that I have been made an instrument of good. This is a proof that it is not the most eloquent address, nor the greatest talents; *not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.*" He concluded the conversation by saying, "Remember, from the lips of a dying man, you are charged to preach the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour." On one of his family asking him how he did, resting his arm on his Bible, he replied, "Here I am, safe. I know it is a finished righteousness;" and on another occasion, "The promises in this book are my sheet-anchor."

On the 1st of February, having considerably revived, he expressed a hope, that he might be able to address his people at the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, on the following Sunday. His daughter said, "I do not think you must attempt that." The reply was in the words of the beloved disciple, "My dear, I would only say, *Little children, love one another.*" Indeed, this amiable spirit characterised him in death, as in life; for his only anxiety was, that his church might continue in peace and harmony; and his frequent prayer ascended, that they might be directed in the choice of a successor.

To God he attributed all the kindness he had met with from friends, and particularly from ministers; from whom he could not recollect having received one act of unkindness. The reply was, "It would have been singular had this not

been the case, when you have been uniformly amiable." The humble Christian shook his head, saying, "My dear, do not praise me, only pray for me." His sufferings were very severe, and it was with difficulty those who attended him could support the sight of them. Some of the following expressions were uttered in these moments :—

"My sufferings are not worth a thought,
When, Lord, compar'd with thine."

"Human nature cannot bear this long. What must have been the sufferings of the martyrs at the stake? What must have been the Saviour's agony, when, in the prospect of death, he cried out, *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done?* What are my sufferings, compared to the Saviour's in the garden, when he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood?" With peculiar emphasis, never to be forgotten, he prayed, "Father of mercies, hear my poor prayer; if not to relieve, to help me to bear, and suffer,—

'A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall:
Be Thou my strength, and righteousness,
My Jesus, and my all!'

It is the hand of the Lord: I desire to bow with submission. This suffering is all necessary to loosen my strong attachment to my beloved family:

'Why should I shrink at thy command,
Whose love forbids my fears,
Or tremble at the gracious hand
That wipes away my tears?

'No, let me rather freely yield
What most I prize, to Thee,
Who never hast a good withheld,
Or wilt withhold, from me.'"

His affection to those whom he had long loved still triumphed over pain and suffering. To his tenderly beloved wife he said, "You have made an idol of me, and God is removing me; but look up to Him: He will take care of you." He committed her as a legacy to his friends and children, entreating his daughter to guard her from all recollections that would remind her of the loss she would soon have sustained. To his brother, who was much agitated at the prospect of their separation, he said, "You must be still, and remember it is the will of the Lord." On a relative taking a final leave of him, he made the following remark:—"As a minister of Christ, let usefulness be your constant aim." For the eternal interests of his grand-children he was most anxious; frequently did he entreat them *to remember their Creator in the days of their youth.*

That total absence of every consideration of self, which marked the active days of our admirable friend, was exhibited in the passive scenes of sickness. When in extreme pain, not a murmur escaped him; but he constantly feared that those who attended him would suffer from exertion, as great weariness of his frame was induced by the nature of his disease, which precluded all possibility of taking repose in a recumbent posture. A few hours before his death, he said, "What will you do, when I get weaker?" But the Sun of peace was soon to rise, never to set, relative

affections, pastoral duties, benevolent feelings, were shortly to be absorbed in the vision of uncreated beauty and excellence. He was soon to hear the harps of the angelic world, welcoming him to the abodes of holy joy and peace.

On Tuesday evening, the 7th of February, his brother, who was to preach the lecture, saw him previously, when he asked what was the proposed text, making some remarks which proved that there was no decay of intellectual vigour. After this conversation, he had a short and quiet sleep; on awaking from which, his daughter inquired how he felt. His reply was, "I am refreshed, but my disease is not abated." She said, "Your mind seems perfectly composed." The answer to this remark, was a testimony to the fidelity of his God, "Yes, *the Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.*" The sands were now running low—the tide of life ebbed rapidly. The dearest object of a hallowed affection entered the room: his lips uttered an expression of deep tenderness; he gently laid his head on her shoulder, and the unfettered spirit took its upward flight to that world with which he had long held communion. So favoured was he, that the cold waters of death had been seen only in perspective. None of the usual precursors had agitated the dying saint. So calmly did he die, there was no sting. One moment expressing the tenderest earthly love; the next, ushered into the presence of the Best Beloved. The angel of death had a short triumph—the wing was felt,—the arrow was pointless.

CHAPTER XII.

Reflections on Mr. Townsend's most prominent Characteristics.

It has been asserted in private—charges have been delivered from the pulpit, accusing those who are active and zealous in aiding the general and universal interests of religion, of neglecting their studies, not fulfilling their pastoral duties, forgetting their sick and afflicted, with many similar aspersions from the less ardent and less zealous servants of the same Master. But the writer of this memoir can affirm, that, as a pastor, Mr. Townsend was exemplary. His church had been organised by himself, on the form he believed most scriptural,—that of Congregational Dissent; and the firmness of his character secured to him that peace, which so many pastors in the same denomination never find.

He always urged on his people the necessity of prayer, with the utility and duty of attending meetings for this devotional exercise. Whatever his other engagements might be, this part of divine worship was neither forgotten nor neglected, and was, perhaps, never performed with more touching solemnity, and more deep humility, than by our excellent friend.

The privilege of coming to the sacrament was constantly exhibited in his sermons: he encouraged the timid, and pointed out the obligations they were under, to obey the dying injunction of their Redeemer. His conviction of the sin that attends those who live in the neglect of this ordinance, induced him to publish a tract "On the great neglect of the Lord's Supper."

When the members of his church were ill, he was ever ready with his sympathy and his prayers, though in this part of his pastoral obligation he found an occasion for greater self-denial than in some others. Still he esteemed it so primary a duty, that no committee was allowed to interfere with it. He frequently went, when sinking under extreme debility, to visit such claimants, who were resident some miles distant. His affectionate disposition, united with much judgment, eminently qualified him for visits to the house of mourning: his consolations were soothing, his conversation instructive. To the aged and the young he was alike acceptable.

He was ever anxious to know the wants and necessities of his people; but his visits to the tables of his congregation were rare, as they did not enter into the list of what he considered pastoral duties. An unexpected summons to a committee, or to preach a charity sermon, would make him relinquish the most agreeable social interview; and a biscuit and draught of cold water, taken in London, were frequently substituted for the well-spread board, at which he would have been a welcome guest.

The schools attached to the chapel received a large share of his attention: he found time, not merely to catechise the children, but to exhort and warn them of sins, incidental to their age and circumstances.

In the pulpit, Mr. Townsend had been singularly useful to persons in almost every rank of life. His sermons were plain, simple, unadorned; having neither the aid of rhetoric nor imagination. They had all the comprehensiveness of vigorous thought, with little abstractedness, their tendency being obvious to the meanest capacity. He always cultivated simplicity in preaching, as he believed it characterised the primitive teachers. Order and arrangement were evident—his materials were full and clear—his manner impressive and grave. From the Bible he brought his arguments, his reasonings, his appeals; and never did he enter on any of the abstruser points of doctrine, without supporting his assertions with a quotation from Scripture. The understanding, the conscience, the heart, were the objects of his attack—he convinced, awakened, and comforted. His doctrines were orthodox, and he never separated them from duties, but insisted on the necessity of practical religion arising from evangelical principles, and each truth of the Gospel was displayed in his sermons. The free and sovereign grace of God was the favourite theme of his preaching, but the effect he displayed as necessarily arising from the reception of such grace, was pure and undefiled religion, which had its seat in the heart, and its birth in the love of God. He taught that faith in Christ must

necessarily produce love, from which obedience arises, with a conformity to the divine image. The doctrines of justification by works, and of baptismal regeneration, were frequently assailed in his sermons, as he believed they set aside the righteousness of Christ, and the influences of the Holy Spirit. He delighted in the exhibition of the consolations of religion; but he could strike his hearers with awe and terror, when he felt it his duty to rouse the lethargic, or to recal the wandering.

Mr. Townsend has been aptly styled "the apostle of charity;" such in very truth he was. The sphere of his philanthropy was so large, and embraced so great a variety of objects, that the relation would be tedious. He had not only commenced and reared two lasting monuments of his benevolence and perseverance, but he belonged to almost every society that embraced either religious, moral, or physical relief to his fellow men. The perusal of the accompanying sketch will give an imperfect view, which is more fully developed in the selections from the Diary. There are, however, some acts of beneficence, to be related only by those, who knew him in his more private habits. With a limited income, he allowed aged persons a small stipend to assist them in the winter, at which season he distributed coals; giving not merely to those of his own congregation, but extending his liberality to the poor of his neighbourhood. So early as the year 1786, he had established a society for visiting the sick; and the love and respect shown him by the miserable

and destitute of his own vicinity, equalled the tribute of admiration which he was ever receiving from the noble and the wealthy. He was sometimes honoured by being appointed almoner; but this never superseded the usual draft upon his own funds, which was extended with every increase of income.*

His distribution of tracts was very extensive: he never left home without a supply, and he embraced every opportunity of sending them abroad. An agent was constantly employed by him, to convey these useful little messengers of mercy to prisons, hospitals, and workhouses.

Mr. Townsend possessed a clear and vigorous understanding. His conceptions were neither striking nor imaginative, but he had great originality and accuracy of thought. His intellectual endowments were not numerous, but he had a mind well informed on all subjects, connected with the general interests of the world and of the Church.

Prudence was a prominent feature in his character; and to this valuable gift, with his extraordinary energy and perseverance, may be attributed much that he effected. His caution never allowed him to communicate, in his private circle, aught that had transpired in committees, or in his pastoral visits.

He had a singular power of abstracting himself

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* Mr. Townsend having met with a loss of property, his old and tried friend, Mr. Hawkes, bequeathed to him a sum which was an ample equivalent.

from external objects, and could summon at will materials for the composition of a sermon, a tract, or an essay, not only in the crowded streets of a city, but in committee rooms, where, probably, his attention would be immediately called to discuss an intricate question. At such times he would rise, and, after apparent inattention to all that had previously passed, would make a luminous speech, aptly and immediately bearing on the subject under discussion.

His power of embracing objects so multifarious arose, not merely from energy and a determination to accomplish what he had undertaken, but he had that valuable art, too commonly neglected, of securing every fragment of time; not a minute was lost, either at home, or in society; no useless conversation was allowed to intrude on hours sacred to usefulness. He knew no relaxation, but that which arose from the variety of his pursuits.

That there was an universal confidence in his judgment, was evident from the frequent appeals made to him for decision, in cases of difficulty. Churches and families submitted to him their most private affairs; and his character as a peace-maker beautifully blended with his sense of justice, which never allowed him to condemn any man, but upon clear evidence of guilt. He never listened to surmises, nor to that species of slander from which the most innocent can find no refuge. The absence of all acerbity of character marked his decisions and his opinions—severe to himself, he loved to display that mercy to others—

" Which becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown."

" In the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy."

A dissenter from conviction, Mr. Townsend had imbibed too much of the spirit of his Master, to allow an attachment to modes and systems to separate him from Christians of a different party. With pleasure he united with all, who believed in one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism. Gentle in points where no dereliction of principle was involved, he was inflexible when duty required. His opposition to Lord Sidmouth's Bill, and Mr. Brougham's Education Bill, was both active and decided. The extracts we have given from the preface to Claude, will prove Mr. T.'s strong attachment to the principles of Protestantism. Had he lived in the sixteenth century, he would probably have ranked with a Luther and a Melancthon.

In his domestic character, Mr. Townsend was constitutionally amiable—he needed not that self-control which many Christians find necessary—gentleness and tenderness were his characteristics; there was nothing selfish, nothing contracted. As a husband, he was affectionate and considerate. The only shade that crossed his brow during his last illness, was on the reflection of what a beloved wife might suffer for his loss. As a father, his great anxiety was, that he might see his children devoted to the service of God, in faith and good works. Many were the prayers he offered for

them; and deeply, till the latest moment of life, did he value those, which his excellent parents had offered for him.

In his filial and fraternal relations, he was exemplary. His affectionate union with his brother was neither dimmed by increasing age, nor lessened by frequent absence. Sympathy of feeling, and similarity of sentiment, so blended with the natural tenderness of their characters, that nothing arose, in a long life, to cast a shadow over the brightness of a love, which might be compared to that of David and Jonathan.

As a master, he was always solicitous that his servants should receive every comfort which their situations could secure, and his attention to their religious improvement was constant.

As a Christian, Mr. Townsend was remarkable for heavenly mindedness and humility. Prayer was his element; every distinct act of the day was consecrated by the blessing implored on it, before he left his study. It was his weapon of defence to secure him from all that might injure him in his commerce with the world. Never would he enter on sacred duty, without devoting an hour to holding communion with his God. He rose frequently at six, sometimes earlier, to secure this privilege; esteeming it the only way to ensure tranquillity of mind, and purity in the affections. His humility was of an extraordinary character, and marked every action, every sermon, every conversation.

The following quotation from a sermon delivered on the occasion of his death, will not here be irrelevant:—

"He was a man of sincere and unaffected humility: his temptations to vanity were as powerful as could well have assailed any public character—the applause of popular assemblies, the homage of the representatives of foreign nations, the condescensions of royal favour on the part of crowned heads, and of princes of the blood, the general estimation of the wise and good; yet all this abated not the lowly estimate he formed of himself. He was proof against 'the fascinations of the high-born smile,' which dissolved not his stedfast virtue, nor betrayed him into vain glorious display, or obtrusive presumption. I heard a venerable Prelate of the Episcopal church once say to him in a public company, 'Mr. Townsend, if you come to our city, and take up your quarters any where but in the Bishop's palace, I shall be quite affronted with you:' and this was not the only instance in which the Episcopal portals were open to receive him by express invitation."

Neither envy nor jealousy entered his soul. The rising star of a younger and more popular minister was hailed with pleasure; and if, by accidental levity in conversation or in conduct, such were likely to fall under censure, his moral and Christian courage never failed to warn them of their danger. He has frequently incurred the risk of losing their friendship, rather than encourage that which his devout spirit esteemed wrong. Any allusions to Scripture, uttered thoughtlessly, always grieved him, and the advice of the Apostle to the Ephesians * being his motto, was enforced on those

* Ephes. iv. 29.

with whom he associated. A strict adherence to truth marked his own conversation: he avoided narrative, as he dreaded the probability of giving an unintentional gloss, which might mislead those who listened.

Christian principles were the basis of Mr. Townsend's character. Nature had given him much that was bright and excellent, and she might have made him a philanthropist; but it was religion that sanctified the high and noble purposes of his soul, giving, as a motive, the heavenly consideration, that he was not his own, but had been *bought with a price*, which no duty, no sacrifice, could ever cancel. This was the operative principle of his benevolence—the centre, from which diverged every line of exertion. His list of duties was well arranged, and the arrangement acted on—all had a due proportion—nothing turned his well-directed mind from its plans. Duty to God, duty to man, forbade any personal indulgence, any love of self—the will and the affections were imbued with that spirit, which turns to gold all it touches. He gave diligence to add to his faith virtue; to virtue knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity; and can we doubt that the promised entrance was ministered to him abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

When the Patriarch was buried, there went with him a great company, who mourned with great and sore lamentation. Thus it was with our venerable friend, at whose interment a tribute of respect and esteem was exhibited, which was

almost unparalleled. The carriages covered a length of road that might have indicated a royal funeral. The voluntary homage of thousands, told that the poor had lost a friend, the helpless a counsellor, the children a father.

Numerous were the testimonies of affectionate respect to the memory of her deceased husband which his widow received after his death. The following are not unworthy to be left on record.

"At a Special Meeting of the Committee of the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb children of the Poor, held at the City of London Tavern, on Thursday, the 9th of February, 1826—

"Resolved unanimously—That this Meeting have to record, with feelings of the deepest regret, the lamented death of the Rev. John Townsend, the founder of this useful and extensive charity.

"That the Committee beg to offer their sincere condolence to his widow, and his bereaved family, and to request permission to attend his funeral, as a testimony of respect for the memory of their excellent and much esteemed friend.

"That a communication be requested with the Executor, in order that the intentions of the Committee may be carried into effect in the way that shall be considered the most respectful on the occasion, and most in accordance with the feelings of the family."

A marble bust, presented by the Duke of Gloucester and the Committee, will perpetuate, in the

halls of this Institution, the memory of him, who first had compassion on its helpless and interesting inmates.

"*Religious Tract Society. Feb.* 28, 1826.

"At a Meeting of the Committee held this day,

"Resolved—That the Committee offer to the bereaved family and friends of the late Rev. John Townsend, their sincere condolence, and, at the same time, recur to his memory with sentiments of profound respect and most cordial regard; sensible that, in losing him, the Church and the world have lost a bright ornament, and an eminent benefactor.

"On his devotional spirit, on the soundness of his judgment, the simplicity of his manners, the suavity of his disposition, and his exemplary zeal in the numerous departments of labour into which his piety and philanthropy conducted him, it were both easy and gratifying to expatiate. But to speak more appropriately,—

"In him, the Committee welcomed one of their earliest friends, an acceptable contributor to their publications, for many years a member of their body, and, they feel persuaded, to the latest period of his life, an individual, whose congratulations and prayers accompanied the progress of the Society, in its operations throughout the world."

"At a Meeting of the Board of Congregational Ministers, on Tuesday the 14th of February, 1826,

"It was unanimously resolved—That though it has not been the usage of this Board to advert to the decease of its members, it is, nevertheless, deemed proper to record on its minutes a special resolution, expressive of its deep regret at the recent event, which, in the dispensation of Divine Providence, has removed from their fellowship on earth the Rev. JOHN TOWNSEND; whose memory they desire to venerate with grateful recollections, on account of his EMINENT CHRISTIAN PHILANTHROPY, and especially the PRACTICAL and EFFICIENT BENEVOLENCE which he displayed on behalf of that denomination, to which this Board more particularly belongs.

"On this occasion, they deem it their incumbent duty to pay this marked tribute of RESPECT and AFFECTION to the CHARACTER of their DEPARTED FRIEND, as the only practicable method of expressing their respect and veneration."

The following is a copy of a resolution passed unanimously, by the Committee of the Congregational School, at their meeting held on Monday, the 20th April, 1826:—

"It having pleased the great Head of the Church, in the arrangements of his unerring Providence, to call home to himself, since the last meeting of this Commitee, the venerable and excellent founder of the Congregational School,

"Resolved—That this Committee is anxious to embrace the earliest opportunity of recording its sense of the very great loss which this School, in

common with the numerous religious and benevolent Institutions with which the late Rev. John Townsend stood connected, has sustained by his removal.

"This Committee will long and fondly cherish the memory of his amiable deportment, of his unaffected piety, of his disinterested zeal, and of the eminent services which he rendered, not only to this Institution, but to the cause of Christ at large."

The following excellent letter was written three days before Mr. Townsend's death, and addressed to his sorrowing wife :—

"*February* 4, 1826.

"My dear Friend,—I have been confined by a severe indisposition to the house for these several weeks, else I should have personally inquired after the afflicted state of *your* venerable husband, and *my* beloved friend. I learned, the day before yesterday, that it was deemed proper to keep him quiet and undisturbed, even by the approach of the tenderest friendship, except that of his own family: I have therefore taken the liberty, through you, of requesting your dear daughter to send me, if but two lines, as to the state of his health; for, as to his mind, I know he is with God, enjoying the anticipation of his Saviour, in his Heavenly Father's house. He has, in the course of a long and useful life, done much for God; but he can yet, while the powers of articulation remain, continue the same sacred work, and he can in silence suffer for the honour of God; and, like a great man, 'He who has taught us how to live, can now teach us how to die.' Gather up, I beseech you, even the broken fragments of devotional feeling, as they fall from his lips; they will form a rich legacy to his beloved family, his church, and the extensive circle of his pious friends. The words of dying saints

become living oracles to minds susceptible of feeling their worth. In regard to yourself, my beloved friend, the promises of your covenant God will be your support, and the meltings of heavenly sympathy the solace of your heart. You have an interest, I say, not only in the tender sympathies of all who know you, but what is infinitely better, in the tender compassions of the Son of God, whose bosom is the dwelling-place of pity. While the natural and honourable feelings of your heart, in its risings to heaven, plead for his continuance a little longer with you and your family, in the dark evening of advanced life, it is probable that there is another voice issuing from the excellent glory, addressed to your dearest friend, saying, *Come up hither*. Bow down in silent submission to the will of Him, who can do nothing wrong, nothing unwise, and nothing which, to His redeemed people, is eventually unkind. If he depart, it is in answer to the Saviour's supplication, *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory*. What a heart! He does not seem fully to enjoy His mediatorial reward, till His redeemed people become witnesses of its splendour, and also of the uncreated effulgence of the glory He had with the Father before the world was.

"I shall ever bear him on my heart before the throne of our Father and our God; and beg you will convey to him the assurances of my tender sympathy and earnest supplications, that he may be supported amid the billows by Him, who sits King on the floods, and be conducted in safety to the shores of immortal blessedness.

"With every sentiment of esteem and affectionate Christian attachment, I ever am,

"My dear Friend,

"Yours, very sincerely,

"A. WAUGH."

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY.

JAN. 15, 1818.—"This is the anniversary of the birth of my youngest son. In our eyes he was lovely—to us, very dear. What a grave has the western world been to Europeans! To-day, he would have attained his thirty-first year. What varied and painful reflections return to my mind! and, as often before, so now, I regret that I can procure no intelligence of his thoughts or feelings in his last hours. Never does the country in which he died come to my recollection, but it produces a chilling influence through all my frame.

"Be content, my soul, with the will of Heaven. *What thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter.* Rest in hope; he was instructed in the ways of righteousness, he was the child of many prayers, and of many faithful admonitions. He gave, in his letters, some tokens of reflection upon those things which are of the first importance. Suffice it that God has said, *They who sow in tears shall reap in joy.* It cannot be, that prayer, and faith, and hope, shall prove utterly fruitless."

Feb. 27.—"This day paid a visit to my dear friend, Mr. Hardcastle, who is gradually sinking. He is perfectly resigned to the dispensation of Him, whose wisdom and mercy form the basis of hope and comfort to the Christian. The dying saint is willing either to live or die. In this submissive temper of mind, he said—"If I am to live, I shall welcome life, and thank its Giver—if I am to die, I shall welcome death, and thank its Conqueror—but if I have any choice, it is to die, and be with Christ, which is far better.'"

April 11.—"This morning I have been reading the character, piety, and death of the Rev. David Brown, who was a burning and a shining light in the superstitious regions whither he had directed his steps. By the extent of his labours, by his uniform piety and disinterestedness, by the ardour of his zeal, and the consummate prudence of his measures, he honoured his divine Master, and exemplified the excellency, the power, and the purity of that Gospel which he preached to others. We seldom find such talents and usefulness, united with such unassuming modesty, unfeigned humility, and entire abandonment of all regard to personal ease, worldly interest, and human applause. If this eminent servant of Christ felt constrained humbly to deplore, and feelingly to lament his own unworthiness, regretting that he had not done more for God, what reason have I for humility. O Lord, let the impressions made upon my mind to-day continue, that I may be stimulated to more diligence, spirituality, and self

denial, and be more assiduous in the improvement of time and talents.

April.—" This morning received pleasing intelligence from ——, of the 99th Regiment, now in Upper Canada. This officer dropped accidentally into a place of worship in the city while I was preaching, and the Lord was pleased to make that sermon the means of his conversion to God. He had one short interview with me before he left England. He goes on well in the good way, and is laying himself out for great usefulness in that dark and uncultivated spot. He is stirring up the clergy, and such religious persons as he meets with, to acts of mercy and benevolence. *I have no greater joy, than to hear that my children walk in the truth.* Lord, grant me many more seals to my ministry, such as shall be my joy here, and my crown of glory hereafter!

May 5.—" Attended the meeting of the London Auxiliary Irish Evangelical Society. Some of the first speakers had condemned the measures of Government in the treatment of Ireland. Aware that this might be injurious, I rose, and said:— "This meeting is not only constituted of different denominations, but composed of persons who differ in political opinions; such topics, therefore, should be avoided. Our meeting respects the spiritual concerns of Ireland, and the Chairman suitably remarked, in his opening speech, that we have nothing to do with the political or commercial interests of the sister kingdom, but are to aim exclusively at the evangelization of that

superstitious country. Perhaps I may be blamed by some, who may think me timid and cold-hearted towards the great question of civil liberty; but I am satisfied this is neither the time, nor the place, for the discussion of such topics; and, as an old man, I may be forgiven for recommending prudence. More battles have been lost by a rash and indiscreet zeal, than by cowardice or caution. Am I not supported by the example of Christ, when he sent out his disciples to preach the Gospel? He did not think it needful to charge them to show great ardour in their attacks upon the kingdom of darkness and sin; but the soul and quintessence of that interesting charge lay principally in this sentiment: *Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.* The nature of the times in which we live, and the watchfulness of our enemies to find occasion against us, loudly call upon us, to keep the advice of our divine Master in continual remembrance."

Aug. 31.—"Went this day to dine with the treasurer and friends of the Sea-bathing Infirmary at Margate. Before dinner, we walked over the wards, where I was much pained to see so large a number of sufferers, reduced to the most deplorable condition by that cruel disease, scrofula. At the entrance-hall of the Infirmary, were suspended several wooden crutches, left there by those who had received a perfect cure. How much more delightful to see these, than the swords and spears taken in battle, which remind us only of the dear-bought victories, where thousands have been sacrificed to avarice or ambition. These crutches

are the trophies of mercy, and proclaim the healing power of Him, whose mercies are over all his works, and who healeth all our diseases and forgiveth all our iniquities. The whole scene convinced me of the truth, and justified the saying of the Rev. Weeden Butler: 'The man who can be an enemy to such a Charity, must have a hard heart indeed.'"

Sep. 17.—"Attended a meeting this evening for the formation of a society to be called the Continental Society, for spreading the Gospel over the dark places of the Continent. Mr. Drummond read some letters from Switzerland, Geneva, France, &c., soliciting pecuniary assistance for the employment of some evangelical teachers, and for the diffusion of the Bible and religious tracts. O that a blessing from the Almighty may rest upon our feeble endeavours."

30.—"Domestic troubles have rolled in upon me this week; my spirits have been much depressed, and I have felt a great disposition to murmur. Let me now put my own doctrines into practice, and preach to my church and congregation, by my own temper, that which I have urged upon them, in seasons of affliction. Yes, be still, my soul, and confess the equity and goodness of God; see how many mercies are still left, and how many excellent Christians are in deeper waters than those which have overflowed my tent. Let me, above all, think how much I need these friendly and merciful corrections; may they make me more humble, more spiritual, more prayerful, and wean me more from this vain and transitory

state; preparing me for that better, brighter, more peaceful region, which so many of my friends, and some of my nearest relations, have already entered!"

Dec. 7.—"Went again to see Mr. Hardcastle; found him rather worse—with 'the meekness of wisdom and the gentleness of Christ' shining in him. He told me, he should not be long here, but that he was thankful to his heavenly Father, that He had seen fit to remove him of late from the business of this world, that he might look towards another. 'I am desirous,' said he, 'of leaving myself in His hands, who holds the keys of hell and of death.' He rejoiced when I recited to him the leading articles of religious intelligence which I had learned that morning at the Bible Society, and also at the meeting of the committee of the Missionary Society; especially that there was a Bible Society formed in Paris, by the consent of the civil Government. Indeed we had that day experienced a delightful repast. The Rev. John Owen made his first visit to the committee, after his biblical tour in France, Switzerland, Germany, &c. The minds of all present were greatly impressed by the account of his journey. His speech on this occasion was one of the most brilliant displays of the variety and excellency of this speaker's talents that I had ever heard. He gave a comprehensive but rapid view of what he had accomplished; including his interviews and conversations with the Duke de Richelieu, Count Boissy D'Anglas, &c. The wisdom and prudence which had been discovered in his conduct

at Paris and Geneva were no less conspicuous than his zeal. The whole narrative of his tour was expressed in so lively, humble, and interesting a manner, and was interspersed with such marked and pious confessions of gratitude to God, and devotedness to the cause of the Bible and Bible Societies, that a new impulse was given to the zeal of the committee. What an incalculable loss does the Church of England sustain, by allowing such men as Mr. Owen to occupy inferior posts, while she is every day raising to her high places, men, who, by their lukewarmness, their worldly-mindedness, and their incapacity, are doing more to retard her true progress, and to weaken her genuine strength, than any of her avowed enemies."

March 12, 1819.—"This has been a day of deep reflection. The honourable, but arduous, service of giving the address at the interment of my dear friend Mr. H—— devolved upon me. As I passed among the tombs in Bunhill-Fields, the recollection of many whom I had loved and valued rushed to my heart; and I looked on that grave where lie buried my honoured and beloved parents. The last enemy is mowing down the few friends that remain; soon will he number me with those who are gone before. Do I know this? Do I feel this? Why then am I not less careful for the things of time, and more enamoured of the realities of another and a better world?"

May 8.—"Had a restless night; endeavoured to refresh and support my mind, by a repetition of the 8th chapter of Romans. What an interesting por-

tion of Scripture!—a description of human nature, agreeing with my own personal experience. Here is the way of salvation by Jesus Christ—chosen in Him, justified by his offering of Himself, renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and made partakers of the divine image. Here is an enumeration of the privileges and blessings of a Christian. No condemnation to him; all things work together for his good. He has the Spirit of adoption, and is the heir of God, the joint-heir of Christ, and the inheritor of glory. Here are the proofs and evidences of a Christian's real state, and of those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

"August.—In the delightful and well-cultivated grounds of my friends at Sunbury, I rejoice to have escaped from the smoke and hurry of the metropolis. Nature smiles around,—the flowers in bloom, the trees, bending with riches, raise my heart in gratitude to God, who has provided me so pleasant a retreat; but, alas! even here I find care, anxiety, and a heart of unbelief, embittering the cup of human life, and reminding me, that this is not my rest; yea, convincing me, that, could the earthly Eden be restored, it would be nothing without a sense of the pardon of sin, and the Spirit of adoption."

Jan. 2, 1820.—"In the evening, preached a funeral sermon for two females, who regularly attended on my ministry. One of these individuals, who had lived to the age of eighty, was a striking proof of the beneficial influence of the impression made by catechetical exercises in infancy. Carried into the vortex of worldly folly,

married to a man, who kept her from the ordinances of God; all failed to eradicate from her mind the powerful recollection of early instruction, and the religion professed in her youth. Conscience gave her no rest, till she forsook the broad path of sin, and entered the narrow way of holiness."

Jan. 17.—"Met the directors of the Missionary Society, when I received the following letter:—

'Sir,—You will pardon, I hope, a stranger, who imposes on you the duty of distributing the enclosed bank-note, to alleviate the distresses you so feelingly and powerfully portrayed on Sunday evening, in your sermon on justification, from Romans vi. 7.'

"This is right—good fruit arising from the good old doctrine of justification by faith. I had strongly advocated the necessity of good works, from the writings of the Apostle Paul, who was the champion of justification by faith. I had challenged a disproval of the sentiment—that the advocates of justification by faith, employed themselves in more works of mercy, than those who pleaded them for their acceptance with God."

April 30.—"Have been reading the life of Mr. John Janeway, which was written by his excellent brother, whose name was very dear to the early Non-conformists of Bermondsey. A firm faith in the promises of God; an entire separation from, and holy elevation above, this world; a uniform and spiritual communion with God, by prayer and meditation; a devout longing for the enjoyment of heaven, living every day upon its confines, absorbed in the love of God; marked this young Christian. How few of these rich attainments are mine! So cold, so unbelieving, and so earthly, I

am covered with humility, shame, and remorse. O Lord, infuse more of this vital religion into my soul! Spirit divine! Fountain of life! breathe on thy servant; impart to me this heavenly mind; help me to keep the same distance from the world, and to cherish the same spirit of prayer and meditation, keeping in view, incessantly, the presence of the all-seeing God, and the solemnities of death and eternity. If I am raised up from this affliction, O grant that I may live in a much closer communion with Thee, and feel more of that uniform and ardent love for souls, which warmed the heart of this excellent youth. Grant that, in the hour when my heart and flesh fail, the holy principles which influenced him, may give me an equal indifference to the retreating blessings of life, the same elevated views of the heavenly glory, with an assurance of my personal interest in it."

May 5.—"Read, this morning, my usual portion in the psalms, gospels, and epistles. All unite in confession of human depravity, in renunciation of self-righteousness, and in a hope through Him who obtained the remission of our sins, by the sacrifice of Himself.

24.—"The situation of ——— has, to-day, painfully occupied my mind. I long to impart some spiritual good in his present affliction; but what can be said to support the mind, and comfort the soul, of one who does not believe the divine origin of that book, from whence I draw my every hope and comfort? I will send him Dr. Bogue's essay: perhaps his narrow escape from a sudden and unprepared death, may have induced a teach-

able and tender spirit. A letter, written with meekness, may win him to better principles; the small, still voice, may be more efficacious than the storm and the earthquake: In the school of affliction, may God teach him some of those profitable lessons which others have learned there! May he be taught his own lost condition as a sinner; then his discriminating and intelligent mind will perceive the suitableness, the excellency, and the value of the remedy, so beautifully exhibited in the Gospel of Christ. He already expresses a wish he could believe; and sees the inconsistency of those who, when on their knees, confess they are 'miserable sinners, and have left undone' all that they 'ought to have done,' and from the pulpit read a lecture on the dignity of human nature, the power of man to make his own peace with God, and the efficacy of good works to procure for us eternal life. Yes, even this individual shall, in the judgment, condemn the self-righteous, who, professing themselves to be ministers of Christ, send 'miserable sinners' to their own virtues and duties for righteousness, in opposition to that Apostle who says, *By the deeds of the law, no flesh can be justified;* that *if righteousness come by the law, then is Christ dead in vain.*"

May 31.—"At the manufacturing committee of the Deaf and Dumb, received complaints against two boys, who went to Greenwich Fair without permission. How injurious to the morals of the lower orders are the scenes of vice exhibited at these places. Such is their demoralising tendency, that all the correctives which Christian zeal and

benevolence can supply, will not elevate the poor from their present state of irreligion. Our Bible Associations, our Sunday Schools, our village preaching, have done much to instruct and christianise the population of the country; but those execrable nurses of every bad principle, and every bad passion, form an opposing current, which carries an innumerable multitude of infantile transgressors down the stream of vice, and furnishes our tribunals with hordes of juvenile offenders. It has been frequently asked, What good have the societies done? By unquestionable evidence it has been proved, that they have drawn many of the poor from those haunts of wickedness, brought them to fulfil their relative duties in the week, and to attend the worship of God on the Sabbath. It cannot be doubted, that, if the ministers of religion, and the magistrates of this country, had supported morality and good conduct, as the friends of Bible Societies have done, England, in religion and morals, would present scenes more pleasing to the Christian and the philanthropist. But the enemies of these Institutions cherish so great a hatred to what they denominate Puritanical Sabbaths and Calvinistic religion, that they leave the poor in ignorance and vice, rather than allow them instruction by those channels."

June 13.—" When my study-window was opened this morning, at half-past six o'clock, the sun shone brilliantly, and gave promise of a beautiful day; but, before nine, the clouds overcast the sky, a mist arose from the earth, and a blight fell upon the gardens, threatening to destroy the hopes which

the fine blossoms, and the abundance of tender fruit, had cherished. Two things occurred to my mind, from this sudden and unexpected change. It resembled the case of some young people, whose embarkation in life had been bright and cheerful, promising a pleasant and delightful day; when, soon, dark clouds overcast their worldly prospect, and their hopes were blighted in a moment. It resembled the first days of a splendid profession, which some have made, of religion. The blossoms were beautiful, abundant, and sweet—the fruit seemed set and prosperous—when, lo! the whole scene changed—an awful blight succeeded, the the fruit perished, and it became evident how much we needed the exhortation of the Apostle: *Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.*"

June 26.—"Attended the meeting of Missionary Directors. What glorious intelligence from the South Seas! Such heart-reviving news has not been published for many years—may I not say, ages? What a scene presented itself when the King and Queen, with nearly six thousand of their idolatrous subjects, assembled to worship the living God, and to unite their assent to a code, framed upon the principles and laws of His holy Word. Shall we not exclaim, *What hath God wrought!* The north is now giving up, and the south does not keep back; the sons and daughters of our God are coming from the east, and from the west, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

Aug. 24.—" Preached at Orange-Street Chapel, and referred to the memorable recollections belonging to this day. The Christian Church should never forget the massacre of the Protestants in 1572, nor that the diabolical deed was celebrated at Rome, as acceptable to God, and beneficial to his Church.

" On this day, 2000 excellent and useful ministers were ejected from the Church of England—an act which was disgraceful to an English government, and injurious to the best interests of pure and evangelical religion. In this impolitic and mischievous transaction was laid the foundation of that honourable and extensive separation from the National Church, which has ever since been the object of its jealousy and fear."

Hastings, Sept. 14.—" Rose this morning at six o'clock. The beach, covered with boats and fishermen mending their nets, reminds me of the shores of that sea from whence the first founders of the Christian Church went forth, in the name and in the strength of their divine Master, preaching peace and the remission of sins, through the blood and righteousness of the Messiah. O how mightily did the Spirit of God work by them, to confound the heathen oracles, refute the specious sophistries of the pagan philosophers, and the pride and unbelief of the hardened Jews! They had no weapons to war with, but those which were spiritual; but these proved mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds. How different the principles, the character, and the minis-

terial labours of those lordly rulers of modern churches, who claim an uninterrupted succession from the Apostles."

Sept. 30.—"In my morning reading, met with many very striking passages. The word of God is to the mind, what bread is to the body, being sweet, pleasant, and nourishing. It is a rich and valuable treasure,—medicine to the sick and diseased soul. O that the Holy Spirit would give me faith to believe its solemn admonitions, its rich and consoling promises; and to say, *More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb!*"

Oct. 18.—"On my return home from London, catechised the children of the school, and preached from James ii. 1. While I pointed out the humility, meekness, and charity which characterised the real disciples of Christ in their conduct towards the meanest and poorest Christian, I cautioned the children against the abused application of the term equality, reminding them that Christ commanded honour to be paid to all in authority over them."

Jan. 13, 1821.—"Dr. Young may well conclude, that those who sleep in death would be void of rest and peace, if dreams infest the grave. What distracted illusions have disturbed my mind, while I lay in the image of death during the past night! I dreamed I had fallen into sin, dishonoured my profession, and offended my God. The distress and agitation of my mind awoke me. Strong was the feeling of satisfaction that it was

only a dream; but I could not shake off the dejection which it produced. The-latter arose from an impression that I was not making an effieient progress in a conformity to the mind and image of God. O Spirit divine! breathe upon my soul, and lead me into a closer and more perfect union with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ! Be with me through the whole of this day; that in reading, writing, and conversation, I may do good and get good! Let thy blessing be upon all the branches of my family, that religion may be the first, the great, the constant concern of their minds."

Feb. 9.—"Passed the morning in my study; devoted the remainder of the day to the sick and afflicted. In my visits, met some who attended and patronised Oratorios. These amusements I thought it my duty to condemn in the most unqualified manner, as a profanation of sacred things. To make the sufferings and death of Christ the subject of public entertainment—to put the solemn language of the expiring Mediator into the mouths of actors and actresses, whose principles and conduct are at variance with every principle and precept of our holy religion—is a prostitution of the awful scenes of Calvary, and of the dying agonies of the Messiah.

March 31.—"Finished Dr. Chalmers' Sermons on the application of Christianity to the commercial and ordinary affairs of life. How vigorous is the mind of the preacher, who is one of the best moral anatomists, laying open the very nerves and arteries of the soul. The wickedness

and duplicity of the human heart have not escaped him; well does he pourtray the deceitfulness of sin, and demonstrate its powerful and ruinous tendencies."

June 1.—"Have had a tranquil night, and awoke with these words,—

> 'Call me away from flesh and sense;
> One word of thine can call me hence.'

These words were appropriate, as my spirits were depressed at the prospect of separation from my brother, who leaves me to-day. Blessed be God! we are united in spiritual as in natural bonds. May he have a safe and pleasant voyage; and, while the feelings of my heart follow him, let me not forget that little band of missionaries who have just left their native shores. May the great Pilot of the Church guide them over the trackless deep to their desired haven. May the Holy Spirit fill them, and the members of the deputation, with prudence, firmness, and heavenly wisdom, that they may be happy and honoured instruments in extending the kingdom of God our Saviour. We must not expect uninterrupted success; there are too many who oppose: but He that sits on the mediatorial throne, shall reign till all his enemies are put under his feet."

July 6.—"Have finished Miss Edgeworth's life of her father, who appears to have been an active, honourable, and useful member of society. Miss E—— is anxious to vindicate both him and herself from the censure, that religion has no pre-eminence in their writings. Neither of them had

scriptural views of Christianity: the old 'Whole Duty of Man' was their guide. They have no sentiments which harmonise with the doctrine of salvation by the obedience and death of Christ. What can be more in opposition than the following remark? 'If there is a state of just retribution in another world, I must be happy; for I have suffered during the greatest part of my life, and know that I did not deserve it by my thoughts or actions.' Grieved am I that their works, securing, from their excellencies in some points, a large circulation amongst the young, should discover no knowledge of the moral degradation of the human heart, the beauty of religion, or the necessity of that inward and spiritual grace, of which baptism is the outward and visible sign. How different, how superior the writings of Mrs. Hannah More, which probe the heart, tear off the veil of external formality, and direct sinners to the Mediator, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."

July 27.—"My portion of private reading this morning was, the Patriarch Jacob blessing the two sons of Joseph. How does this simple recital display the sovereignty of God, who does not act in the order and direction most agreeable to our natural inclination, both in providence and grace. He does his own pleasure, and fulfils his own counsels. How often have I said, 'Not so;' and wished circumstances to be changed: but God does all things well, and, although darkness and clouds are round about Him, judgment and righteousness are the habitation of his throne."

July 29.—Hastings, Sunday morning.—"No service at church. How disgraceful to the clergyman who possesses both livings, to the principal gentlemen of the town, and to the Bishop of the diocese, who ought to know there is only one sermon in each church for so large a population. My zeal is stirred within me; I must bear some open testimony against such a disregard to the religion I love.—But may I not injure, where to do good is my object? Zeal says, testify against these evils—prudence, let not thy words be hasty. Our Lord says, *Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.* Can I forget that an evangelical clergyman, who officiated for a few months at this place, excited such an increased attendance in the church, and so general a reformation in the whole population, as made it evident that the true principles of the Gospel are best calculated to enlighten the ignorant, awaken the careless, and produce excellence of conduct throughout the whole mass of society. While, on the contrary, the formal and cold lectures of the moralist leave sinners in that darkness and impurity, from which Christ died to redeem them."

Aug. 6.—"Have been reading the life of Lord Bacon. If men could see the issue to which sin tends, how watchful, how circumspect would they be in all their conduct. The absence of this religious fear, has often made a life of honour and usefulness terminate disgracefully and miserably. The fear of God furnishes the strongest ground of a conscientious resistance to sin."

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'Take my poor heart just as it is,
Set up therein thy throne;
Then shall I love Thee above all,
And live to Thee alone.'"

Oct. 6.—"While preparing my sermons for to-morrow, my mind was most painfully overwhelmed with gloom, thinking that, were I really a Christian, I should have more enjoyment of the love and presence of God. It appeared that I had no interest in the blessings promised to the righteous. My soul was in an agony, and the tears flowed from my eyes; I rose from my seat, and poured out my heart to God in prayer; indeed, like the Patriarch, I wrestled with Him as a

Life of Granville Sharpe. The reviewer says, 'This was not a *great*, but a *good* man.' Why should he not be called a great good man? He was great in piety, philanthropy, and every deed of mercy, and eminently entitled to the praise and admiration of the wise and good. He was one of the most consistent churchmen I knew; not only avowing an ardent attachment to the ritual of the church, but was in the habit of observing all its fasts and festivals."

Aug. 26.—"The light of another Sabbath has dawned upon the world. How few value the privileges of this day, or go up to the worship of God with joy and peace. To many it has no charms to render it a day of delight and honour, a day of pleasure and satisfaction."

"Thirty-four years have rolled away since my dear mother departed to her rest. How precious is the memory of her, who taught me to lisp the praises of the Most High, and gave power to her precepts and warnings by her prayers and tears."

Sept. 3.—"At the committee of the Bible Society heard some interesting letters from Turkey. Dr. Pinkerton took leave, on his departure for St. Petersburg. On his retiring, Mr. Owen related the following anecdote:—'The late Patriarch of Constantinople, who was hung before the door of the Greek church by the cruel and furious Turks, said to Dr. P——, when he was in that city, Are you a married man? On his replying in the affirmative, the Bishop said, What an excellent woman must your wife be, to

part with such a husband, for the purpose of promoting the good of others. I pray you to carry to her, and share yourself in, my patriarchal blessing."

Sept. 28.—" Attended the committee of the Mill-Hill School, and the Bible Committee. On my return home, commenced a new course of catechetical exercises in the schools; attended prayer meeting in the evening; after which was taken suddenly ill. I lifted up my heart in prayer to God, but felt too much the temper of the tribes, who were anxious to stop on the side of Jordan next the wilderness. Why do I not realise a higher and more permanent confidence in the promises of God? I love his house, ordinances, and word; rest all my hopes on the mediation of Jesus Christ, praying to the Holy Spirit for his sanctifying influences; yet, amidst all, I am such a mystery to myself, that I can only say,—

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poor helpless sinner; cast myself upon his mercy and grace; pleaded the blood and righteousness of the Mediator; and, after some time, found the blessing of having a throne where I could carry my sorrows. O that I may prize it more and more! I should be the victim of despair, could I not fly to the fountain opened to take away iniquity. How valuable is an all-sufficient and compassionate Saviour; He is, indeed, the fairest among ten thousand."

Oct. 16.—"Have been to Kingston, assisting at the ordination of a county missionary. An interesting report was read: twenty villages have willingly received our teachers. It was proposed to employ another in a new district; and, on the want of money being urged, one, who felt as a Christian ought to feel, engaged to give fifty pounds a-year towards the object. Thus encouraged, the society adopted measures which would secure the instruction of four thousand poor people."

Nov. 12.—"At ——, a friend related a striking anecdote of a rector, and a nobleman, who was patron of the living. When dying, the latter sent for the clergyman, to whom he said, 'Do you not know that my life has been licentious, and that I have violated the commandments? yet you never warned me of my danger.' The clergyman was silent; when the nobleman repeated the question. 'Yes, my Lord, your manner of living was not unknown to me; but your kindness, and my fear of offending you, deterred me from reproving you.' 'How cruel! how wicked!' said the dying man.

'The provision I made for you and your family, ought to have induced a care and fidelity. You have neglected to warn and to instruct me, and now my soul will be lost.' These were the last words of one whose situation has too many parallels. Men living in continued profligacy attend at church; where, frequently, from the pulpit, there is little said of the malignity of sin, and the hatred of God to all that violate his holy law. The teachers generalise, speaking indefinitely, and never giving a direct delineation of the state of the heart; forgetting what God said to the Prophet who did not warn the sinner,—*His blood will I require at your hands.* But the nobleman could plead no excuse at the bar whither he had been summoned. His conscience must have warned him, while listening to the liturgy of the Church, in which the defilement, guilt, and curse of sin are clearly exhibited."

Nov. 21.—"My dear —— has been ill, and my anxieties have been great. Do not these earthly affections engross my heart and interrupt my devotions? I long to say—

'My God, my portion, and my love,
My everlasting all;
I've none but Thee in heaven above,
Or on this earthly ball:'—

and sometimes doubt if any Christian is so far from the spirit and enjoyment of these sentiments as I am; but my soul aspires to make God the fountain of its felicity. This becomes every day

more needful, as human joys and comforts are losing their beauty, and withering in my hands."

Dec. 4.—" From the committee of the Missionary Society went to Earl-street, where Mr. Owen read, from the Christian Remembrancer, some violent and unfounded attacks upon the British and Foreign Bible Society. False charges, uncharitable insinuations, malignant invectives, mark that hostile paper. From whence arises the opposition to this noble and prosperous Institution? Roman Catholics abroad, uniting with a party in the Protestant Church of England, to denounce the circulation of the Book given by God himself; the former causing it to be burnt, and excommunicating those who receive it into their houses; some of the Bishops of the latter, in their charges, opposing, and in their private influence, disgracing, those who countenance Bible Institutions, while they promote those who oppose them. Is it not the spirit of the Romish Church, fostered in the bosom of our Protestant one?

March 22 1822.—" Rose with a frame much exhausted by extreme coughing, and a mind discomposed and agitated by that heart of unbelief, which opposes itself to my whole range of duties, secret, family, and public. Darkness, instead of light; sin operating where holiness should abound. I might use the expression of the Apostle, *that in me dwelleth no good thing*. I depart not from the practice of a Christian, but aim to glorify God by making his love known to others, whose temporal wants I wish to relieve; yet, with all this, I am

indeed an unprofitable servant. My communion with God does not take the high and spiritual character I desire; my religious exercises are too much a duty, and I would they should be all pleasure."

April 19.—"Have this morning been reading in a periodical work, a letter, said to be written by the late Rev. Mr. ——, containing the following philippic against dissenters. 'The present system of dissent tends to break down all social order, and establish a host of petty tyrants. I have lately paid some attention to the subject, and am led to conclude, that the system of things is not adapted to the present state of society, nor has a foundation in Scripture. Church and State! "with all thy faults, I love thee still."' On reading this paragraph, I wrote the following letter to the editors:

"Gentlemen,—By the medium of a letter said to have been written by the late Rev. Mr.——, you have transmitted throughout the kingdom, an illiberal, unfounded, and libellous charge, against the whole body of dissenters. To say nothing, at present, on the question at issue between churchmen and dissenters,—is it prudent? is it likely to produce any beneficial result, to revive such acrimonious expressions? When the enemies of the Christian faith, of Bible Institutions, and of Missionary exertions, have put out all their policy, all their power, is it not the duty of Christians to forget and lay aside their peculiar controversies, and, with one heart and mind, to strive together, for the glory of God and the salvation of sinners? Instead of contending with each other, had they not better *Contend for the faith, once delivered to the saints*? It was a beautiful sentiment of the Bishop of Norwich, 'that unity of heart is better than uniformity of sentiment.' How awfully have the interests of truth and righteousness suffered, by the division and contentions of the Christian world. The enemy has been sowing the land with tares, while we have been fighting for the

best *mode* of extending religion. Let us, then, cease this unprofitable warfare about respective forms of Church government, and give our time, our talents, and our zeal, to nobler purposes. I esteem the dissenter and the churchman, who unite to revive these bickerings, as common enemies of the great and mighty projects, in which the Christian world is so honourably occupied; works which, in point of extent and importance, should engage the watchful observation of every eye, the energy of every hand, and the union of every heart."

May 6.—" My dear brother is expected this evening; may the God of the sea and the dry land, give him a safe and prosperous voyage. I tremble when I reflect how much pleasure and enjoyment I have promised myself from the sight of him, and in his society:

> ' We should suspect some danger nigh,
> Where we possess delight.'

With increasing years, we feel a growing attachment. How delightful the thought, that the friendship of Christians will be cemented by eternal bonds."

8.—" Heard the first missionary sermon from Dr. Hanna, of Belfast; the text, John xxi. 17; the discourse, an hour and three quarters in length, but no weariness. I could not refrain from weeping, that my love and gratitude to Christ were so languid and cold. O Lord, shed abroad more of thy love in my heart! Increase my love to Thee, my zeal for thy glory, and the salvation of souls. I hope my heart is more and more anxious for the prosperity of the Church, in all its departments and interests. I long to see Christians unite without any party feeling, considering themselves as the servants of one Master."

May 24.—"On seeing the sun rising above the horizon with great beauty and strength, these words darted to my mind,—

'Now from the altar of my heart,
Let incense flames arise;
Assist me, Lord, to offer up
My morning sacrifice.'

On repeating favourite hymns, I find my memory is decaying with my other faculties of mind and body. What is the lesson to be learned from these symptoms? Work *while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work.*—Rising at four instead of six, would give me facilities of finishing some of my tracts and essays, which I fear will be rendered useless, unless I devote to them this additional time."

June 14.—"My dear ——— is recovered from the sudden and alarming attacks of Wednesday night. There is much mercy in this, as her life is of great importance to us all, and to me, more particularly valuable. She looked *well to the ways of her household,* and did not eat *the bread of idleness* To my children, she has proved a wise, indulgent, and careful mother. In her religious character and conduct, she has been an example. The death of such a wife, and such a mother, would be an irreparable loss."

July 18.—"The disquietude and unsettled state of many dissenting churches, is, to me, a source of deep regret. This morning, saw the Rev. Mr.——, &c.; these good men suffer from the pride, self-sufficiency, and self-interest, which prevail. When will the mild and peaceful influence of religion act

upon human passions, to produce forbearance and love? Attachment to Christ ought to be a bond of affection and union, that the world might say, 'See how these Christians love.' The churches ought to be the emblem and epitome of that rest, which remaineth for the people of God—that rest where all will be harmony and peace."

Aug. 9.—"Last night, was restless, and my wakeful moments characterised by an indisposition to meditate upon spiritual and eternal things. To rouse and direct my mind, I recurred to the hymns, and to the chapters of Scripture I had learned. These hours would not be tedious, if the songs of Zion more engaged the heart, and led it to humble and devout prayer.

'My thoughts surmount these lower skies,
And look within the veil;
There springs of endless pleasure rise,
The waters never fail.

There pleasure rolls its living flood,
From sin and dross refin'd,
Still springing from the throne of God,
And fit to cheer the mind.'

Oct. 1.—"The date of this memorandum, impresses me with a consciousness of the speed with which the last days of human existence fly. It seems a moment of time, since my anticipation of spring and summer. The falling of the autumnal leaves, the cold chill of morning and evening, say winter is near. Nature shrinks at the prospect, as the state of my lungs makes it doubtful whether I may survive it. Shortly, my services, moral, benevolent, and religious, will be as nothing. The

grandeur of God, the solemnity of eternity, and my responsibility as a minister, almost overwhelm me. I must watch and pray, making the name of Jesus my only trust, and waiting his decision with humble hope and firm reliance upon his word."

Nov. 20.—" Awoke this morning with the following lines of Dr. Watts on my mind:—

> ' Dear God, the treasures of thy love
> Are everlasting mines;
> Deep as our helpless miseries are,
> And boundless, as our sins.'

These sentiments harmonise with the doctrines taught by the Prophets and Apostles, and are adapted to encourage the faith and hope of the timid Christian, when oppressed with a conviction of his unworthiness."

Dec. 5.—" Passed this day in my study; read the Bishop of Gloucester's third charge to the clergy of his diocese. If the English Bench were filled with men who felt the importance of their office, and who were actuated by the love and zeal that animated the Apostles—if the parochial clergy were such men as this excellent Bishop wishes to make the clergy of his diocese, there would be a revival in, and glory shed round, the Church of England, such as she has not seen since the days of Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley."

11.—" Rose with severe pain in my side; my mind incapable of meditation—an involuntary sigh escaped—with, Lord, help me! This short, but comprehensive prayer, was suitable to my heart, which was oppressed with the danger of my

dear child. May I have the faith, and pray with the importunity and perseverance, of the Syrophenician woman, and then the same Almighty Power may say, *Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.*"

Dec. 31.—" Before I close the memoranda of this year, I would solemnly and devoutly, O Lord God, offer up to Thee, the heart-felt homage of a grateful mind. I would confess my own ingratitude and unfruitfulness, and humbly implore the pardon and removal of these oppressive evils. With the new year, grant me an increase of new covenant blessings, and a larger portion of the Holy Spirit, that the remainder of my days may be more god-like, and more heaven-like. Deliver me from these earthly and grovelling affections, and let my conversation be as becometh the Gospel. And you, my dear children, if you ever read this hasty and unconnected memorial of your departed father, know that, although you are seldom mentioned in these pages, you were never far from my thoughts. My heart has often felt a deep and affectionate solicitude, for the eternal welfare of you, and yours. Unworthy as I am, yet, having found great favour in the eyes of my fellow-creatures, and been greatly prospered and blessed by the God of heaven, my name has hitherto been treated with respect—do nothing, I implore you, that shall disgrace it. O that the God of your father, and your father's father, may crown you with his grace and blessing! May we meet in heaven, to praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the one living Jehovah, the God of

salvation; the God in whom I trust for pardon, sanctification, and eternal glory."

Jan. 20, 1823.—"Cold intense; great distress amongst the poor. The following anecdote was told by a mother, to whom I had sent bread and coals. On returning home, she found her little family crying with the cold, and intreating for some fire. The reply was, 'I have no money to buy coals.' A child at the door exclaimed, 'There is a man with some.' 'Yes,' said the poor mother, 'but they are not for us.' Scarcely had she finished speaking, when the man inquired for her; and the sound of these coals, must have been music in the ears of the little shivering group. Oh! what disease, what poverty, what distress, has sin brought into our world. What mercy to have escaped so many of these evils, for more than sixty-five years!"

March 6.—"The sounds of affliction and death have again saluted my ears. An early, diligent, and faithful assistant in the London Missionary Society, the Rev. Mr. Greathead, has finished his course. Many were the hours he devoted to his study. I hope to die either there, or in my pulpit, that I may be found working—not loitering, nor sleeping; but let me indulge no preference. God is too wise to err in his Government, and too good to those who trust in Him, either to forget or to forsake them. Let me only aspire to die in his favour, and to enjoy his divine presence.

April 13.—"The rector of St. John's is departed to his rest. This excellent man performed the duties of his office, with purity of motive and

anxiety of mind. The milk of human kindness mingled in his character with much of the meekness of Christ. He was a diligent, faithful pastor; superintending his parish as one who must give an account. Kind and generous to the poor, tender and compassionate to the sick. Some of the parishioners knew not his worth; but those who despised and persecuted him, may one day acknowledge, that a prophet has been among them."

May 5.—"Went to the Bible Committee, where a letter was read from Mr. B——, accepting the secretaryship. Its language was that of sterling sense, unfeigned piety, and true humility. How beautiful and happy are the effects of the Bible Society! Is not the union of Christians, the very essence and glory of our common faith? Is not such union, the evidence of that love and harmony which the spread of the Gospel is finally to accomplish? Is not this the spirit which reigns in the celestial world? Are the redeemed in that glorious state arranged in churches, sects, and classes? It is the tendency of the Bible Society to promote this union; it is this which constitutes one ground of objection in the minds of bigots, and men zealous only for *forms, modes, systems,* and *parties.* But of such we will say, *To their own Master, they must stand or fall:* they must give account to Him, who judgeth righteously. The day is coming, when we shall know who have most effectually fulfilled their duty to Him; whether it is those who have joined the ranks of the Bible Society, and assisted in the dispersion of nearly four

millions of copies of the sacred Books, or those who have not only withheld their aid, but have opposed and slandered others, who have engaged in this work."

Oct. 4.—" Goodness and mercy have followed me and mine; and, with the returning light of another day, have returned the usual comforts. Yesterday had great difficulty in visiting five or six afflicted families; some individuals very ill. Had an interesting prayer-meeting; returned home much indisposed; read and prepared some of the Essays, till three o'clock."

Dec. 31.—" Languid and ill, I would close the year with casting myself on thy care, O my God! Out of my great insufficiency, do Thou perfect thy strength and glory! Apply, Most Holy Spirit, to my conscience, the power of the Redeemer's atonement! May sermons preached during the past year, receive a heavenly benediction; and, when my feeble labours are ended, may I have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

March 4, 1824. Hatcham House.—" This spot reminds me of him with whom I once walked and took sweet counsel; but he has reached a happier clime, and walks along the avenues of that paradise in which the tree of life blooms in infinite perfection. What a mercy that the branches bend as low as the thorny paths of the wilderness; extending their shade to the sun-burnt traveller, producing fruit to sustain him when hungry, and leaves to make a balsam for all his maladies. Beautiful image of the excellency and value of

the blessed Redeemer; and yet men forsake this Plant of renown, and fly to the brambles of the wilderness, which afford them no shelter."

March 9.—" Attended the Bible Committee: Lord Bexley in the chair; who conducted the business with his usual cool judgment and extreme gentleness. There was much warm discussion on the Apochryphal question. I fear that the unity, the beauty, and the strength of the society are endangered by the continued irritation which this subject excites."

July 21.—" Have passed an almost sleepless night; my mind could not meditate on any subject. Thou cold heart! how long shall I have to bear with thee and thy earthly propensities? Why art thou not sighing for the elevation of mind which will be found in the worship of the temple above?

> ' Raise thee, my soul, fly up and run
> Through ev'ry heavenly street,
> And say there's nought below the sun
> That's worthy of thy feet.' "

Nov. 27.—" Another week has fulfilled its round, and the Sabbath again approaches. Let me enter into my own heart,

> ———' Talk with [my] past hours,
> And ask them what report they bear to heav'n.'

The week has been crowned with mercies, and strength has been given for my various duties: to-morrow is for God, and the momentous affairs of the soul; may it be marked by a spiritual and devout repose, which will make it the foretaste of an eternal Sabbath."

Dec. 25.—"To-day, have met my large group of children and grand-children. This will probably be the last interview, as the year ensuing may be that of painful separation. To have my soul prepared for eternity is my first and dearest wish; and when the summons for departure shall come, may I be willing to enter the kingdom where neither sorrow, sin, nor death will be known!"

Jan. 31, 1825.—"My grandson from Hastings has been to breakfast with me; he was the only child of his mother, and she made him the subject of many pious and ardent prayers, and taught him to lisp prayer and praise to the God, whom she loved and feared. O that the faith and piety which was found in his dear parent, may be found in him!"

Feb. 28.—"In my conversation with a friend to-day, contrived to introduce the subject of the heavenly world; reference was made to some sentiments expressed by Dr. Watts. It was admitted that he had given many sublime and scriptural views, but that a few of his descriptions had too much imagination. To me, his hymns possess a great charm, as exhibiting in a pleasing form, the perfection, government, and mercy of Jehovah, with the degradation of human nature, till brought under divine influence. The perusal of these divine songs, excites in the mind adoration, love, and gratitude to Him, *Who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*"

March 24.—" Spiritual and eternal things have much occupied my attention during the last few days. What discipline the mind needs, to keep it active and vigorous on heavenly objects! How unwilling to cherish the thought, that perhaps in a few days, my concern with time will cease, and I shall enter on a boundless eternity. Nothing can yield satisfaction, but the atonement and intercession of Christ. In my darkest and most painful conflicts, it is my consolation, that, if I perish, I shall perish at the foot of the cross. The evil of sin, and the deceitfulness of my own heart, appal me; I would be holy, as God is holy, and as desirous of holiness and conformity to God, as I am of happiness."

April 19.—" Rose this morning weary, as if it were evening, yet I have had more sleep than usual. Help me, O Father of mercies, to be still and submissive under increasing infirmities, and to hear the gentle intimation which they suggest, that soon I must mingle with the dust. I desire to feel the solemn injunction, *Be ye therefore ready.* My friend, Mrs. ——, is to be buried in Bunhill Fields; my grave lies beyond hers and that of Mr. H——. I shall be carried by them both, but there will be no salutation—there reigns perpetual silence. Delightful thought! that there is a place, where we shall meet, and spend an eternity together; mutually rejoicing in, and praising, Him, to whom we owe our redemption."

June 2.—" Was much pleased to find that Mrs. ——, intended to found an Infant School.

May the Father of mercies crown it with his approbation and blessing! May the Saviour receive and bless the children! then

> 'Infant voices shall proclaim
> Their early blessings on his name.'"

June 18.—"Assisted at the ceremony of laying the first stone of the grammar school at Mill Hill. The day was fine, the company numerous and respectable; all animated with the desire that this Institution might long flourish. Its religious and moral character render it interesting, and it promises much literary excellence. If the liberality and energy of the present committee are perpetuated in those who shall succeed them, this establishment will rank with the best public schools in the country."

July 20.—"The extreme heat of the last few days has frequently reminded me of the slaves who are working under a burning sun, and of our missionaries in hot climates, who, suffering from heat and exhaustion, continue their labours to enlighten those who are in heathen darkness. How inferior are all the services of English pastors, even should we preach six sermons in the week, and attend every benevolent object that claims our sympathy."

23.—"Yesterday, suffered much from langour and depression of mind; but when my spirit was overwhelmed within me, I looked to the Rock of ages, and implored strength to support in hours of debility and weakness. The shadows of evening are upon me; let me, then, gather up the fragments of

my time. Many of these will make one whole day, and one whole day redeemed, is of great value."

July 29.—"Our domestic happiness has been threatened with interruption by the sudden illness of our dear grand-daughter, but a merciful God has restored her to our wishes and affection. Thus we go on through the wilderness, the subjects of alternate pain and ease, hopes and fears; but how soon will these be absorbed in one vast eternity! What unexpected circumstances arise to interrupt the peace and comfort of us poor pilgrims! There is a world where all will be order, purity, and pleasure. Come, my soul, meditate upon this; seek a more clear and more extended knowledge of its blessedness, and endeavour to obtain a more complete and entire preparation for it."

Sep. 3.—"My friend, the Rev. Mr. ——, called this morning to consult me on the state of his church! How is this excellent and laborious minister depressed in his comforts, and injured in his usefulness, by the unholy spirit that prevails there. Awful and injurious is the temper, which these dividers of churches manifest: it seems as if they had never heard that their Master was meek and lowly in spirit, and that the following is a divine command: *Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.*"

16.—"Have risen this morning relieved from the pain which had made me suffer so considerably, but my spiritual maladies are far from being eradicated. My heart is still cold,—my feet not walking in the heavenly road as I desire. I am all infirmity, but will look to Jesus, my great, my

skilful, my compassionate Physician. He can heal and strengthen my soul. What thousands on earth, what millions in heaven, can testify of his wisdom, kindness, and ability."

Dec. 30. — "Last night preached at Fetter-lane, and this evening at the Adelphi. My oppression in speaking was excessive, but it was not perceived. How does God perfect strength in the weakness and helplessness of his creatures? O that I might increase in mental and spiritual vigour! Thou, O Lord, hast promised 'power to the faint,' and 'strength' to those 'that have no might.'"

Jan. 1, 1826.—"This year has opened upon me and my family with beams of mercy. O that our hearts may be filled with gratitude and praise to Him who is the giver of all good, and who has such a claim upon the homage of our hearts and the devotion of our lives! By medical skill, and attentive nursing, I have been restored from that state of suffering which threatened life itself, but still I ought to esteem it only a short suspension of the hour of my dissolution. O Lord! prepare me for the great change: it may come not only soon, but suddenly; and I ought to have nothing to do but to give up my spirit into thy hands, for hast Thou not redeemed me, O Lord God of truth!"

10. — "Yesterday had a very fatiguing day, it being the election for the Deaf and Dumb. I must resign all duties in London. The tent must soon be taken down; but *it is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good.*

Jan. 23.—"Weary and ill through the last week, but yet was enabled to preach at Orange-street on Thursday night: on Friday visited the sick; attended the prayer-meeting in the evening, and hope I felt thankful for so much assistance. On Saturday composed a sermon on 2 Tim. ii. 7." *

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* This entry receives its interest from being the last record penned by Mr. Townsend.

EXTRACTS

FROM

LETTERS, ORIGINAL ESSAYS,

&c. &c.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS, &c.

"*Edinburgh, June* 28, 1800.

"My very Dear ——,

* * * * *

"Through the kind and indulgent care of God, I was brought here in peace and safety last night; and though I have had a long and fatiguing journey, great is the cause for thankfulness, that every spring, every trace, every wheel, and the smallest link in every chain, had its commission to fulfil its office with punctuality.

"My first companion, being of a talkative disposition, soon gave me a history of himself, which showed that he prospered, had money and land, &c.; yet there seemed a spark of envy at a neighbour of his, who had in hand 400 loads of last year's hay, which he said was a fine thing indeed, since it fetched such a high price.

"After travelling a few miles, he left us, when the coachman said, he thought I should find it irksome travelling alone. I told him there were times when a man was never so little alone as when by himself; he stared amazement, and left me, but desired an honest-looking Yorkshireman, who was outside, to come in. My new acquaintance being seated, a general conversation ensued, when, finding myself disposed to converse with him upon religion, I asked him respecting the number of churches and meetings in his neighbourhood, and to which he went. 'To church, to be sure,

was his reply, and that the sermons were near half an hour long. This introduced some remarks from me, on the fall of man, recovery by Jesus Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, and the impossibility of going to heaven without we were really made Christians by the grace of God, and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart.

"The coachman that drove us through part of Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire, and Lincolnshire, exceeded, in profane swearing, all the men I ever met with; and most of the ostlers, postboys, &c., who generally surrounded us where we changed horses, were greatly addicted to the same practice. I exceedingly regretted I had brought no tracts upon swearing. At the door of the Wheat Sheaf inn, near the sixty-seventh mile stone, I much wished to go among a number and reprove them; but, perceiving all to be much hardened, I declined, remembering that scripture, *Cast not your pearls before swine.* I doubt whether my heart was altogether free from shame and cowardice; but I have seen sinners, when reproved in bodies, turn against the reprover. When the coachman, who was the prince of swearers, came for his accustomed fee, I said, 'I am not certain that I ought to give you any thing; you are one of the worst swearers I have long met with. What can you think of yourself? You have been blaspheming the God that made you—that every day preserves you from destruction. Do you remember that you must shortly die, and stand in judgment before God? Have you never read or heard the third commandment?' On giving him the money, I added, 'Let me beseech you to leave off swearing; it is a wicked and disgraceful practice.' He bowed, appeared ashamed; but, it is to be feared, was neither humbled nor convinced.

"I was surprised to find so few cottages on this road, and very little of the waste land turned into garden for the poor. The price of labour, for a considerable way down the road,

is, to the haymakers, no more than one shilling and sixpence per day. I supped at Stamford, and, on re-entering the coach, was composing myself to sleep, and drew up the window. Conscience whispered, 'Though you cannot pray in the family, or in your closet, in your accustomed manner, yet ought you not to look up to Him, who is the God of your life and comfort, in the way permitted by your present circumstances?' Putting down the glass, and turning my eyes toward the face of the widely-extended skies, over which the sable curtains of night were almost drawn, I committed myself, my dear Cordelia, my dear children, and the people of my pastoral charge, to the blessing and care of the God who has fed me and blessed me all my life long. I felt it a mercy that we have a monitor within, which stirs up our minds, by way of remembrance, to those things in which lie much of our duty and our comfort. I now placed myself in a sleeping attitude; but the sound of human voices, the clattering of the whip, the wheels, the coach, all told that I was not reclining on the peaceful pillow, under the roof of my domestic palace. The multitude of glow-worms which bespangled the chalky sides of the road, attracted my attention through the night. I do not ever remember to have seen them either so numerous or so brilliant. While ruminating on their nature and use, I saw in them an emblem of the glory and prosperity of the world, which, glittering but for an hour, is then lost in darkness, and of the transient and short-lived nature of the most splendid profession, when it is not accompanied by genuine religion. Yea, I thought they resembled myself, having sometimes light enough to shine before others, when my own soul is cold and dark.

"Will you present my love to the dear children, and all friends. Write often, and long letters." * * *

" Edinburgh, Saturday morning.

* * * "The weakness, prejudice, and bigotry, which have so long and so disgracefully divided the ministers and churches of Christ, are here sadly visible. I still think there is scarcely an Independent minister in England, to whom the greater part of the ministers in this city would not refuse their pulpits, so frightened are they at the idea of innovation. There are, comparatively, no lectures in the town; and, where there are any, the ground is too holy to be occupied by an Independent. We have, therefore, no alternative, but that of being idle, or preaching out of doors in the villages round the city. On Monday evening, I delivered an address to a large number of children, who are instructed by Mr. ——. On Tuesday, I preached at Newhaven, in the church-yard, to several hundred people. This place is inhabited chiefly by fishermen: the women and children make and bait the nets, and carry the fish to market. The former are remarkably hardy, carry heavy loads, and do more than their husbands, towards the general support of the family. Neither of the sexes like to marry out of their own villages. On Wednesday morning I preached at Leith. Mrs. —— comes to hear me, in spite of all her church and family connexions; and her sisters hear me when not in Edinburgh, but will not enter the court of the gentiles, for fear of the Rabbis.

* * * * *

"I hope that yourself and the dear children are well, and that, night and day, they study your comfort. Give my love and say, if you please, I remember them in my prayers, that God would make them his own children, that they may be the joy and strength of our old age."

"*Edinburgh, July* 6, 1800.

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* * * "The botanic garden here has a great variety of curious plants; and the morning on which I visited it, Dr. Rutherford, the professor of botany, lectured to nearly one hundred students. The lecture was instructive and entertaining. How admirably is the wonderful wisdom and power of God displayed in the minutest fibre of the most obscure and least useful plant. The inattention and indifference of most of the students, who pay each three guineas for the course of lectures, astonished me. A few of them who had books with them, containing the various classes of plants, not only followed the Professor from plant to plant, but also wrote the leading branches of the lecture. The rest were either too late, or listened in the most stupid or playful manner. I thought that if these sprightly youths attended all the lectures, as they do those upon botany, they may one day have the reputation of having been at an university; but it is impossible that they should be much wiser than those who have never seen one."

"*Edinburgh, July* 21, 1800.

"My letter from Dundee was short and hurried, as a delay of two days would have made you uneasy. I was pleased with my visit to this town, which is fast improving in trade and buildings. The pier and the shipping present a lively and cheerful scene, and the manufactories are numerous, especially some very considerable for making sail cloth.

"Provisions are very scarce and dear. At a village near Perth, a short time since, they had neither bread nor meal, the bakers being all without stock; the distress of the women and children was great, having to wait till some could be procured from the neighbouring town. The old

lady with whom I lodged, was, in early life, an A-B-C-darian: she had twelve guineas a year for boarders, and tells me she bought fourteen eggs for one penny, and a leg of mutton for seven-pence. You will guess that she is not very young.

"At one o'clock in the morning, I left Dundee in the mail. The ride from thence to Perth is the most beautiful that can be imagined, and very rich and fertile. Wheat, barley, and oats grow in profusion, as does the linseed, which rises to about the same height, as the canary in the isle of Thanet. At Perth, there is a capital bridge over the Tay; and the landscape reminds me of the view from Richmond.

"We passed the celebrated lake of Lochleven: the castle still stands, from which the Queen escaped. Do you not remember how pleased I was a few years since with the fine picture in Somerset House, on this subject?

"I am requested to protract my stay, but I remind the good folk of the laws of the Medes and Persians, and say, "Home, home, home, is my watch-word." The ladies in Edinburgh say that the ministers from the south are so fond of their wives and their churches, that there is no keeping them beyond the time originally stipulated.

"Tell my dear children, that our friend ——— hast lost a son fifteen years of age, and that I wish them to read and pray over Eccles. xii. 1, 2. and Timothy, iii. 15, 16.

"You know how delighted I was to hear you were in good spirits. May you cast all your care upon Him who careth for you, and rejoice always in Him, who has given you so much proof of the favour He bears you, and yours."

"*Gloucester, October* 1810.

"This morning, after folding letters, and directing them to the gentry and clergy of the neighbourhood, I walked to look at the session's-house, county jail, and several places of religious worship, each of which is respectable. I was pleased

with the sight of the house where Whitfield was born, the school in which he was educated, and the church where he preached his first sermon. I felt much at the sight of all these places, on recollecting how God had blessed his labours. I have also seen the long-to-be-remembered spot, where Bishop Hooper was burnt; and the window in the cloisters from which the savage and inhuman friars feasted their eyes with the scene. The bare recollection of this fact constrains me to say, *What hath God wrought?* Now we sit under our vines and our fig-trees, none being allowed to make us afraid. Yes, from this country, once so dark and so persecuting, the light of the scriptures, and the light of the gospel, are fast disseminating among the nations which lie in darkness and the shadow of death. Let us pray, and work; and wait in patient hope for the fruit: the promise has been given, that 'In due time we shall reap, if we faint not.'

"The congregation at chapel, last night, was very large and attentive. The celebrated Dr. Jenner, of Berkeley, (the father of vaccine inoculation) and his wife, were present; the latter is a very serious and excellent woman.

"I was much delighted to find by your last, that you were well and happy, for I partake in your joys and sorrows. Look up, and look forward, all is well; all will be well; yea, eternally well; no sorrow, no doubts, no distress, shall attend the day of glory and joy above."

Worcester, October 26, 1810.

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* * "A talkative gentleman formed part of my travelling society to-day, who affected to be a wit, and passed many (as he thought) bon-mots. We were told by him very soon, that he had gone to London to seek his fortune, which he had found, and explained this by saying the best fortune was contentment. I begged leave to correct

him, by telling him, there was a wiser maxim contained in an old book with which I was acquainted. 'What' said he 'is that?' 'Godliness with contentment is great gain.' Who should this man be but ———, of celebrated note. The clock strikes and admonishes.

'We take no note of time but by its loss.'

"May we improve it, redeem it, and close it, with a calm and tranquil mind, and with a triumphant, or, at least, a steady faith."

"*Cheltenham.*

* * * * *

* * * "I cannot have a collection for the Deaf and Dumb at the chapel, as a heavy debt remains unpaid, but have circulated a large number of bills and letters; and my last text, which was, 'Zealous of good works,' supplied me with materials, towards the close of the sermon, to touch on the subject, and this has already operated to produce some fruits. I do not expect much, as the great business of those who come here, is to spend; and the gamesters who live here by their profession, entangle many in their snares. I fear there is much gambling, among the gentlemen, and much card-playing and scandal, among the ladies. I do not think it possible, that 'what shall we do,' and 'where shall we go,' can occur any where more frequently in the ranks of the gay and thoughtless, than at Cheltenham. In the library, this morning, was struck with the singular figures that came in quest of novels. Their insipid conversation, and the intolerable restlessness with which they seemed to be tormented, were somewhat relieved by the bustle which soon after commenced, on the arrival of Sir William Guise and his friends. The bells rung, some few guns were fired, and, I suppose, many a bumper of

claret drunk. I shall transmit you a copy of a satirical ballad published on this occasion, that you may judge of the spirit and temper which is discovered in this electioneering warfare; and bids fair to keep the county in a ferment, till after the meeting of Parliament.

"I breakfasted yesterday morning with Dr. Jenner and a party of gentlemen, where we had much pleasing conversation. The Doctor is an intelligent and affable man. He shewed me his last return of persons vaccinated in India by the regular professional men; above 237,000 in 1808, and above 150,000 in 1809. He thinks the Brahmins, and other irregular vaccinators, had operated on many more; and named some large cities, in which the system of vaccination had so completely triumphed, that the small-pox had entirely disappeared for four years. He gave me two guineas, and another of the breakfast-party one, for the Deaf and Dumb.

"Though absent on duty, my home is often painted in memory and imagination, in the most pleasing colours. I count the days, till I shall see it again and take up my winter quarters with renewed delight." * * * * * * *

Thursday morning.

* * * * * * * "It is a wet, dark, morning; and the leaves of the high trees opposite my chamber window are scattering down the High Street in wild confusion. Such is the effect produced upon the sons and daughters of Adam, who flourish to-day in youth and prosperity, and, to morrow, are blown down by the storm of adversity and of death; being swept away to mingle with their mother earth.

"I am now going to pay my homage where it is so justly due, and to express obligations which, for number, variety, and value, far, very far, exceed all I can think, or say, or do.

O that my soul, and all I have, were more entirely and exclusively devoted to Him who, in providence and grace, has done so much for me! But, alas, wherever I am, or whatever I do, I find earth and sin mixed with all; and that man is doomed to sigh, and struggle, and fight, until mortality shall be swallowed up of life; and He who is 'My God and your God,' 'My Father and your Father,' shall take us to the house not made with hands; the mansions of rest and peace, where body, soul, and spirit, shall be pure and holy."

"*Norwich, July* 3*d*, 1811.

* * * * * * * "This city is large and populous, with many congregations; some of them numerous; but, there is not a proportionate degree of zeal and vigour. This part of the country must be visited often, before we can engage its liberality.

"The two Arnolds (Deaf and Dumb) found me out, and drank tea and supped with me; one of them is an excellent sculptor.

"The more I travel, and the more places, churches, and families I see, the more I am reconciled to my lot, and thankful for the goodness of God. O that I could love Him, praise Him, and serve Him, more than I have ever yet done. He is worthy of all I have, and all I am.

Braintree, ——, 1811.

* * * * * * * "While our God is sending showers to water the earth, that it may bring forth, O that He would rend the heavens, and come down; making the spiritual clouds distil righteousness and refresh his redeemed people with his rich and abundant blessing. It is pleasing to see the increase and progress of divine truth, both at home and abroad. The barren wilderness is beginning to blossom as

the rose, and the heathen deserts, which were without the Bible and the Gospel, are becoming as the paradise of God. I have been commending you to Him, who is able to keep us from all evil, from without, and from within. May we enter into his more public worship on the ensuing Lord's day, with joy and gratitude: may we have a devout and undivided heart, and worship our God with joy and acceptance." * * * * *

Yarmouth, ———, 1811.

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* * * "I am glad this journey was resolved upon, as the country people know scarcely any thing of the Missionary Society, or its concerns; of course, making these visits will prove very beneficial. I think I hear you say, 'Let the young men make them;' indeed, if all the ministers would undertake them alternately, the sum would finally be large; but I am aware that some are not suited for such a hurrying plan of operation. * * *

Melbourn, ———, 1811.

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* * "The place I preached at yesterday morning, is one of the small villages which you may see on the hill, at the back of Melbourn. It is so small that it will support neither lawyer, doctor, butcher, nor baker: the last lives five miles off, the doctor five, and the butcher three; yet the collection for the Missionary Society was between eighteen and nineteen pounds!

"The clock is striking eight, and calls me to meet you before the throne of mercy, where the great God gives audience to poor, sinful, helpless, and unbelieving man. May the spirit of grace and supplication rest upon us, and may our prayers come up before the Lord, as the incense of the evening sacrifice."

"*Bedford*, 1813.

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* * "Previously to entering the stage for this place, I went into Bunhill-fields, and walked around the tomb of my dear father and mother, and poured forth a sigh of sincere and affectionate respect, recollecting how much I owed to their tenderness and affection, and not forgetting how soon I might mingle my bones with theirs.

"This town is remarkably quiet and well conducted, on the sabbath; the shops are shut, and none appear occupied in business or pleasure. There is not a population of five thousand inhabitants, and there are five churches, three dissenting meetings, a Wesleyan chapel, a Moravian chapel, and a Jews' synagogue. I shall preach on the spot, where good John Bunyan stood to proclaim the mercy of God to man." * * * *

"*Wakefield*, 1815.

"Disappointment in the plan of my operations prevented my earlier writing to you. My journey has been pleasant, having travelled 177 miles entirely alone—not one inside passenger from London to Ferry Bridge; I, therefore, had the privilege of converting the York coach into a study. The country is beautiful; the crops are abundant and fine: men, women, and children were busily employed, gathering in the well-ripened harvest. I thought I had put the notes of my Sunday evening sermon, the text of which was 2 Cor. iv. 7, among my papers, but looked for them in vain; and, as I had fixed upon that for my text, the first night at Pontefract, I took out my papers, French Testament, pencil, knife, and the cover of a letter from Miss S —— to dear ——: the sight of these names carried me in a moment to Bermondsey and Sunbury, and the agreeable hours we had

all enjoyed together. This reverie having passed, my thoughts returned to my sermon, and, on reading the passage, perceived that the French version differs from ours; but, as you understand that language better than I do, I shall venture no criticism upon their difference, nor introduce any into my sermon; for, you know, I prefer plain and serious remarks to the most serious or ingenious criticism. I was proceeding with my sermon, when another York coach came up, and as the coachmen wished for a chat about horses, guards, and opposition coaches, drove some time abreast, and all eyes were directed into the new study, I could perceive a disposition to smiling and laughter at the seat bestrewed with papers, my Testament, notes, and pencil. However, as the road soon narrowed, I pursued my study without further interruption. My sermon finished, I read "Hall on Free Communion" till the day-light closed. This work must be a fatal blow to the system of strict communion amongst the Baptists. The most plausible and the most powerful points of defence taken from the strongest champion Booth, have been so well sifted, that I think no very weak sensation will be produced.

* * "I hope to see you to-morrow evening, as my journey of 700 miles is now closing. I have been absent twenty-five days, and preached twenty-six sermons, and collected for the Congregational School three hundred and seventy-one pounds, with twenty-three annual subscriptions. Farewell! my heart rejoices at the thought of our so shortly meeting."

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"*Chatham*, 1816.

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"Our reverend friend, with whom I am to be a guest while at Maidstone, grows an old man. Memory fails, and

he finds preaching three times a-day too much. He has been thirty-five years pastor of this people, and has not the liberal support which such a congregation should afford. I see in him a picture of what I soon must be, if spared a little longer: but I would not be discouraged, nor fear the debility and uselessness which are the attendants on old age, but rather leave all to the wise disposer of human events, and be thankful for the varied goodness which has been shown to me and mine. Indeed, although prone to think much of the painful occurrences of life, your resolution and and mine should be, to imitate David, who said, 'I will sing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I sing.'"

TO A GRANDSON AT SCHOOL.

"My dear ———

"I hope this will find you in health, and diligently applying to the duties which devolve upon you in your new situation. The morning of life is a most important part of your journey; and, if it be not carefully improved, and a stock of useful knowledge laid in, the evil will be felt through your future existence. The kindness of Providence has placed you in a situation most favourable to the acquisition of useful learning, and you should not let one single moment, which is due to this object, be devoted to play, or loitered away in idleness. This is a disease which is of the most malignant nature; and which, if once deeply rooted in the human mind, produces a most mischievous influence through the whole journey of life, and makes the individual a curse to himself, and to the family of which he is a member.

The boy at school is the man in miniature; and, therefore, it is almost certain, that the boy who is an idler at school, will be the same in his profession or in his counting-house. It is for this reason that I am so anxious to excite you to activity and diligence at your books, because it will form you into a good habit, and every good habit formed at school is one step towards excellence and success, in all the future walks of life.

"School is the nursery where the infant mind should be furnished with good principles, and where good principles should be cherished and strengthened. Next then, to the importance of attending to your studies, let me direct you to look to your disposition and habits, watching the movements of your own heart, and examining if there be any principles or feelings cherished there, which are either unworthy of yourself, or may lead you to act unworthily towards others.

"Happy shall I be to learn that you give to your masters all that submission, attention, and obedience which is their due. Add nothing to their anxiety, their trouble, or their vexations. Study to please and oblige them; remember that, in all things, they will study your welfare, and only aim to advance your education; and that this is the greatest kindness that they can show to you, and also an act of justice towards your parents, who believe that the tutors will watch over you, and use every means to promote the great object for which you are placed under their care. 'If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.' It is an old and unquestionable maxim, that 'Evil communications corrupt good manners;' and may well form the basis of an admonitory lesson from a grandfather to his grandson, for whose spiritual and eternal welfare he is not only anxious, but for the which he offers fervent and humble prayer to the Father of mercies. Receive, therefore, my dear child, this friendly epistle with a teachable and humble spirit, and, when you have carefully

read it, lift up your heart to God in prayer, that He would make it a blessing to your tender and inexperienced mind.

"Your dear father and myself are both deeply interested in your improvement.

"Believe me,

"Your affectionate grandfather,

"JOHN TOWNSEND."

TO A YOUNG LADY IN HER LAST ILLNESS.

"MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

"Having heard of your long-continued and painful illness, I feel interested in your spiritual and eternal welfare, and am induced to snatch a few moments from the numerous objects which engage my attention, to write you on the all-important subject of religion—the only object worthy your attention or anxiety. Distance precludes my visits, and the state of your health renders it probable, that we may never meet again on earth, but I hope we shall one day unite in the grateful Hosannas, that are sung by the redeemed, in adoration of that Saviour to whose obedience and death, we owe the entire expiation of our transgressions.

"I hope, that before this period, you have been privileged to know your sinfulness and danger, and that the Holy Spirit has led you to Jesus Christ, renewed your immortal nature, and made you the child of God, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven. Inquire seriously on these points, for the Holy Scriptures have affirmed that, there is salvation in no other, Acts iv. 12; and that, except we be born again, we cannot enter the kingdom of God. John iii. 3.

"It has pleased the wise and merciful God, to make you an early subject of affliction; but this is not to be regretted,

as the inspired volume has pronounced that, 'It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in youth,' Lam. iii. 27; and that, although 'no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: yet afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them which are exercised thereby.' Heb. xii. 11. It is said also, 'Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth.' In days of health and prosperity, we forsake this God; therefore in mercy, He surrounds us with the thorny hedge of affliction. Remember then, my dear young friend, that our sorrows do not come by chance, but from Him, by whom the hairs of our heads are numbered.

"Not only remember that your affliction comes from God, but that He has given you many promises to support and console the mind. I will suggest one or two of these, and hope the Lord will give you power to believe and to plead them at his throne of mercy. 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.' Isa. xliii. 2. I doubt not, my dear young friend, that your present circumstances are to you, deep waters, and fiery trials; perhaps, in fear and distress, you are tempted to say, 'All these things are against me;' but let not your heart be troubled: distresses the most severe have in times past, and do still, work together for good to them who love God.

"Commit your soul, my dear young friend, with all its vast and complicated concerns, into the hands of a Saviour. Plead, before the throne of God, the virtue of his sacrifice, the perfections of his righteousness, and the prevailing intercession which He has promised for his people. When He was upon earth, going about doing good, He was the decided Friend of children and young people; of the former, He said, 'Suffer them to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

"Though, like myself, you are a sinner by nature and practice, yet, Christ came to save sinners, and He is a tender-hearted and compassionate Saviour, who does not 'break the bruised reed,' and who will be faithful and just to forgive us our sins, if we confess and forsake them. It is probable, that when you attempt to pray for pardon, you feel much opposition, with a cold and wandering heart, and a deep sense of your own insufficiency, saying only, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' Be not discouraged; a short prayer, if it be the language of a broken heart, will be heard in heaven, and presented by our immortal Advocate.

"In proportion as you decline in health, and approach the eve of your dismission out of this very sinful world, your mind may be depressed by apprehension of fainting in the last trying hour, when the enemy of souls may assault your tender and inexperienced mind by his fiery darts. In that moment, remember the same enemy stood at the right hand of Joshua, to accuse him, but the Lord rebuked him, and pardoned, blessed, and strengthened his servant, saying, 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?' adding, 'Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee.' Zech. iii. 2, 4. I hope the Holy Spirit will give you strength to support your pain and weakness, and that He will give you power to say, 'Death is swallowed up in victory,' and that for you 'to die is gain.'

"Sure and stedfast hope, founded upon the Holy Scriptures, will reconcile you to an immediate separation from your dear parents, when you consider that you will immediately join the company of holy angels and the spirits of just men made perfect. You will say with David, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.

"I must take leave of you, my dear young friend, in the words of the Jewish High Priest: 'The Lord bless thee, and

keep thee: the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.'" Num. vi. 24—26.

"Till I meet you in a happier and better world, believe me,

"Truly your friend,

"JOHN TOWNSEND."

A mutineer in the fleet, in 1797, who lay under sentence of death, requested a visit from Mr. Townsend; on application being made to the Admiralty, this was refused, and the following letter was written.

"I am unable to express how much your application has distressed me; not only that you are in such melancholy circumstances, but that I cannot comply with your request of seeing you; as, though you are entirely unknown to me, I would willingly render you any assistance.

"Your letter did not reach me till noon this day; and as you expected to be removed from the Neptune immediately, I know not where you are; but this is not the only obstacle, as I am much indisposed, and confined to town by the duties of next Sabbath.

"If the letter I have received was dictated by yourself, I rejoice that you can read your Bible, and have some general knowledge of the doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ, who came to save sinners, and who addressed them in the endearing language, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' I hope your chief burden is a sense of your sin, and a deep concern to have it pardoned and washed away in the precious blood of Christ. Read 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; and 1 John i. 7, 8, 9. If your mind is

at all rightly affected, you see yourself among the 'chief of sinners,' 1 Tim. i. 15; and the prayers you offer daily to God, are much in the spirit and language of the 38th and 51st Psalms, which I beg you to read attentively. Study much the sinfulness of your own heart and nature. Look back upon the thoughts, words, and actions of your past life, and you will surely find that you can draw no comfort from these. If you look at them, as they are judged by the righteous God and by his holy law, you must feel shame and remorse, and humbly express yourself in prayer to God, in the following language: 'Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips.' Isa. vi. 5. 'Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.' Job. xl. 4. Beware of trusting for your pardon and salvation, in any thing but the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ: this is the provision grace has made for sinners. Study and pray over Luke xviii. from the 10th to the 14th verse. Never indulge a thought that you are not so bad as others, or that God is not very strict to mark iniquity, nor yet that you can make your peace with God by your confessions, prayers, tears, or receiving the sacrament: these are false refuges, and have deluded many. Suffer me to tell you, that you are a very great sinner; you have left undone the things you ought to have done, and done those things which you ought not to have done, and consequently there is no good in you. Remember, also, that sin is odious to God. The wages of sin is death, even eternal death; and how awful is it, to die in sin, and be lost for ever. Read carefully Luke xvi. 22d to 31st verse. Methinks I hear you say, (O that you may say it from the heart!) How then shall I be saved? What do I want to make me a Christian? What do I want, to prepare me for death and judgment? Important inquiry this! May you never be satisfied till God

himself answer, by showing you that He is your God, and your salvation: till He speak these words with power to your soul. 'Thy sins are forgiven.' Luke vii. 47. I will answer your inquiry in the words of scripture: 'Except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish.' Luke xiii. 3. 'Ye must be born again.' John iii. 7. 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' Heb. xii. 14. 'He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved.' Mark xvi. 16. Finally, the whole doctrine which concerns the salvation of a poor sinner, is comprised in these words: 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.' Isa. lv. 7. Yes! to miserable sinners, God says, 'Come, let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' Isa. i. 18. I will endeavour to show you, the great encouragement there is to look for forgiveness of sin, through the Lord Jesus Christ; for this is the only way by which sinners can be pardoned. Remember, I intreat you, in all your supplications to God, that He forgives only in the name and for the sake of Christ. He died to make atonement for the sins of men: you may read this in the 53d of Isaiah, verses 4, 5, 6. Never harbour a thought, that your sins are either too many or too great, for Him to blot out. He is a great Saviour, and able to save to the uttermost. Heb. vii. 25. He has saved the greatest of all sinners,—Manasseh, Mary Magdalene, and the thief upon the cross, and He is willing and able to save you and your poor sinful companions. Look to Him, trust in Him, and He will not cast you out. He invites, intreats, and commands guilty sinners to come to Him. Pray to be delivered from an unbelieving heart—pray to be kept from looking to, or trusting in, any thing, but Christ. Pray to the Holy Spirit, to teach you your need of Christ, and the remission of sins by Him.

May God send his Spirit to enlighten, help, and comfort; then will you feel all that happiness of which David speaks, Psalm xxxii. 1, 2. 'Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.' If your faith be genuine, it must be known by its fruits. It deeply humbles the sinner in his own eyes; it makes sin very hateful; it makes Christ valuable; it leads the soul to desire holiness as much as happiness, and to mourn more on account of the sin it has committed, than the misery which it has procured. O pray much to the Holy Spirit to seal upon your spirit, the salvation which is in Christ. This will support you in the prospect of death. 'The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55. My congregation and myself will pray, that God will pardon, bless, and save you for Christ's sake, taking you under his own teaching, and finally receiving you into his kingdom. You may read this letter to your companions, and, if you have a Bible, read the 53d and 55th chapters of Isaiah; the 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th chapters of Romans; and the 1st and 2d chapters of Ephesians."

A

POSTHUMOUS CHARGE

TO HIS CHURCH.

"CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

"After labouring among you nearly forty years, it is impossible to realise the thought of my departure from you by death, to give an account of my stewardship to the great Head of the Christian Church, without mingled and strong feelings. In transmitting these thoughts to you, I wish you to accept them as the last effort of my pen to promote your spiritual and eternal interest, and as a last token of my affection.

"The first years of my relation to the church and congregation at Jamaica-row, were stormy and painful, owing to evil tempers in some, and the introduction of Antinomian principles among others; but for many years it has pleased God to bless us with truth and peace.

"Considering the period which I have exercised my ministry among you, the occasions of scandal and the necessity of going to the *dernier resort* of church discipline, (namely, excommunication) have been as few as in most of our Independent churches. I cannot fully express the pleasure I feel, that I am leaving you with your place of worship in a good state of repair, free from debt and embarrassments, the pews all let, and the church and congregation in a state of prosperity.

"When I review the long term of my sojourning among you, I feel grateful for the many proofs it affords of your good-will and affection. I might, in this document, review the whole course of my ministerial and pastoral labours; and in doing this, I feel sensible that I ought to be deeply humbled, on account of my short comings and imperfections; but yet I have faithfully preached the Gospel of the Son of God, in the fullest sense of the expression, including DOCTRINES, EXPERIENCE, and PRACTICE. I have visited the aged, the sick, and the dying, and have uniformly directed them to the Saviour for their justification, and to the Holy Spirit for their sanctification and comfort. And now that you can see my face no more, suffer me, though dead, to speak to you in this farewell address, and kindly receive its reproofs and instructions. Pardon me, if I express a fear, in some instances, that I have laboured in vain, and spent my time for nought. How can I do otherwise, in regard to those who have been altogether careless of the best interests of their immortal souls? You, I fear, have come to the worship of God, somewhat in the spirit and manner of those hearers in the time of Ezekiel, (chap. xxxiii. ver. 21.) You have been pleased with, and even commended, my labours; and yet, it may be, you have never received them with the demonstration of the Holy Spirit, or experienced a genuine conversion to God, but you have rested in the name and profession of religion.

"Some of you, I have reason to hope, have felt the power of those alarming and pointed discourses, which I have delivered to you from the impressive parables of our Lord, and on other practical and awakening subjects. Yea, you, like Felix, have trembled. O! do not say, as he did, 'Go thy way for the present!' THESE ARE MY LAST WORDS. O! that they may touch your hearts, and bring the seed to maturity!

"In the parlour, as in the pulpit, I have urged the pro-

priety and necessity of your coming out from the world, and cleaving closer to God and religion, in favour and in love, resolving on a closer union to the church. Shame, fear, and a divided heart, have kept you irresolute and distant; and, to this moment, you have sinned against your own convictions, offended the Lord your Redeemer, and greatly wronged the interests of your own souls.

"My removal to another world will open the way for you to exercise a great privilege, and the performance of a great duty—that of choosing a NEW PASTOR, to go before you as a spiritual shepherd, to watch over you in the Lord, and to promote your spiritual interests.

"While you are attending to this duty, allow me to remind you of the difficulty of performing it rightly. O how much depends upon your making a wise and Christian choice! Think seriously, my dear Christian friends, how much the interest of your own souls, the souls of your children and servants, and the spiritual good of the whole neighbourhood, depend upon your decision.

"You are entering upon a service of great difficulty. To most of you, it is a new measure; and too often it excites so much feeling, and is mixed up with so many prejudices, and so many various and conflicting interests and opinions, as to produce much contention and strife for the mastery, till division and distraction flow in like an overwhelming torrent.

"You have long lived, my dear brethren, in love and peace, and I do hope these will long continue; but to promote them, you must make some sacrifices. You must, individually and collectively, look up to God to enable you to make, a scriptural decision. Lay aside every personal, every subordinate consideration, and steadily, and with all your hearts, keep in view the glory of God, the

good of the church of which you are members, and the salvation of the souls of the heathen at large. All other ends and objects will be unworthy of you, and tend to frustrate the great end of ministerial instruction; for it ought not to be forgotten by you, that he will be the best and most beneficial minister, whose ministry has the most obvious tendency to awaken and convert carnal sinners and slumbering professors, and to build up Christians in their most holy faith, promoting their growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"In the arduous duty of choosing a NEW MINISTER, the first movement, will, of course, devolve upon the Deacons. Bear with me in urging upon you, the great responsibility under which *you* are laid by the widowed state of the church. O! that a *double portion* of the Spirit of wisdom and prudence may rest upon *you*. Almost every thing depends upon your making a cautious and wise selection of supplies. Many churches have been disturbed, divided, and destroyed, for want of proper attention in this particular. My very dear brethren, your spiritual safety, harmony, and peace, must depend on your not admitting ONE INDIVIDUAL into your pulpit, who is destitute of sound knowledge, the powerful experience of religion, and a sterling character for piety and holiness. If one showy necessitous man is introduced among you, he will make a party, and will determine to settle in your vicinity. Especially guard against being prejudiced or influenced by private friendship, by relative bias, or by first appearances. These have so often deceived the churches, that you should not be precipitate in your decisions; and yet I would guard you against unnecessary delay: that is almost as mischievous as too much haste.

"That you may not be hurried away, or commit yourselves hastily, by prematurely supporting and promoting the election of a successor, allow me to offer a few friendly hints.

Do nothing without consultation, and in nothing act separately, or in opposition to each other; but consult with cool and impartial consideration, guarding against a positive and dogmatical spirit. It would be *wise* and *suitable*, to hold special meetings for prayer, to ask counsel of the God of wisdom and grace.

"The pulpit should be occupied by only one candidate at a time. If you engage the attention of several candidates at once, and then call the church to decide which they approve, division and strife will almost necessarily follow.

"Though you have but one person on trial at a time, yet it will require much caution in coming to a decision; nor should it be much pressed upon the church, unless there is a tolerably large proportion of the church and congregation in favour of that individual; and if there be a very general concurrence, the officers of the church should be extremely cautious in not lightly acting against the majority. On the other hand, the church and congregation should listen with great care to the recommendation of the officers, provided they have exercised due caution in the person selected, and carefully examined into his character, principles, and talents. Indeed, I cannot but urge upon all parties in the church, that they be forward to make a sacrifice of their own opinions and inclinations, to what appears most conducive to the honour of God and the general good of the church. He that makes the largest sacrifice of his own will and inclination to the general good, acts most in accordance with the directions of inspired truth, and the homage and love which he owes to Jesus Christ. On the contrary: he that *distracts* and *divides* the church, by a spirit of *pride*, *selfishness*, or *love of pre-eminence*, proves himself a Diotrophes, and deserves the severest censure and condemnation of all who sincerely love Zion, and who pray for the peace and prosperity thereof.

"I do then *hope* and *earnestly pray*, that you follow the advise of the apostle, 'Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory,' but 'Let brotherly love continue;' and in deliberating and determining the important question, Who shall be the New Minister of the congregation and church? be of one mind, keeping in view, especially, these three things:—That he be well furnished with scriptural knowledge; that he have a warm attachment to Christ and his Gospel; and that he have a strong and prevailing desire for the welfare of immortal souls: for, although he be a real Christian, and act as becomes the Gospel, these alone will not make him a successful minister of Jesus Christ.

"It has often been matter of lamentation to me, that the young people of both sexes have not come forward so generally, or so ardently, in *my* congregation, as in many others, to assist in schools, and in the different Institutions* which have been formed for extending the light and blessings of the Gospel. I will not say any thing in a way of censure, because there may be as much fault on my side, as on their's, owing to my naturally reserved disposition, the slender nature of my educational advantages, and the great press of pulpit and other engagements connected with the modern philanthropic Institutions, in almost every one of which I had some concern, and, consequently, felt some solicitude to uphold and extend them. I have often thought of trying to form our youth into classes, and making a stronger and more

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* Justice to Mr. Townsend's church and congregation, demands the following statement:—They raise and support a Sunday School for girls and boys; a School of Industry, where the children are partly clothed; one consisting of twelve girls, where they are entirely so, and a Day School for twenty boys. They have also a society for visiting and relieving the sick—the proceeds of which are sixty pounds per annum; sometimes the amount exceeds this sum—an auxiliary MissionarySociety, and a Bible andTract Society for local distribution, independently of their exertions in a branch auxiliary Bible Association.

direct appeal to their understandings and consciences; but I was fearful my resources of knowledge were too scanty, especially of that kind which is suited to entertain and amuse, while it impresses and instructs. I hope my successor may possess a greater measure of that species of cultivation, which will give him facility for engaging the attention, and exciting the piety and zeal, of the young people of the congregation. I sometimes cherish the hope, that the period of my ministry has only been a *seed time*, and that my successor will have the unspeakable pleasure of reaping the harvest, and that it will be evident I have not laboured in vain, nor spent my time for nought.

"Though I may justly lament my want of greater success, and pray that it may appear more abundantly when I am removed, yet it would be criminal not to acknowledge—not to express thankfulness to God, for what He has done through my feeble instrumentality. Some of you are seals of my ministry, and will, I trust, be my crown of rejoicing in the great day. I rejoice in the stedfastness with which you have resisted the insidious acts of the proud and hot-headed talkers of the times, who have, by their cunning and deceitful working, beguiled the simple and unwary, and fomented strifes and divisions, which have not only destroyed the peace and the strength of the churches in which they have taken place, but have almost annihilated them.

"Finally, then, my dear Christian friends, I pray you, be on your guard against those whom the inspired volume has thus pointed out, 'Mark them which cause divisions.'

"My constant and earnest desire on your behalf, and my devout prayer to God for every one of you, is, (Numb. vi. 24—26,) 'The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.' Amen and amen.

ON PERSONAL RELIGION.

PERSONAL RELIGION has its seat in the heart, and is the blessing so distinctly promised in Jer. xxiv. 7,—"And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart."—"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Here we see the scriptural source of all genuine religion; it is the gift of God, and the operation of his mighty hand. Our divine Master has illustrated this essence of religion in his representation of the union which subsists between Christ and his people. (John xv. 1—5)—"He shows, that we may as well expect a branch severed from a tree to yield blossom, and bear fruit, as that a natural man should bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, and do the works of faith." The apostle Paul has used another very appropriate figure to exemplify this. He considers every real Christian as a member of the mystical body of Christ, and of course dependant upon his union with Christ, the living Head, for his spiritual life, and for his capacity to do that which is acceptable to God.

Personal Religion has an intimate connexion with the operation of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, as it is given in the sacred pages. The doctrine as stated by Dr. M——, is the most dangerous that can be propagated, as it leads unconverted and irreligious persons to be satisfied with their own spiritual condition, and engenders that false peace, and that delusive hope, which have deceived so many. It also precludes those faithful and solemn addresses to the con-

sciences of men, which are evidently needful for the great mass of our hearers, notwithstanding they have been baptised, and devoted to God in that ordinance, by praying and Christian parents.

Spiritual regeneration, which is the basis of all personal religion, includes considerably more than an introduction into a visible relation to the Christian Church, or a change of sentiments, or a mere improvement in the external conduct. All these are desirable, and have a degree of importance, but they may exist without the heart being really influenced by religion. This is supposed in the definition given by John the Baptist of his own mission: "I, indeed, baptise you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I—He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," Matt. iii. 11; and this view of the subject is illustrated and confirmed, by the character and conduct of Simon Magus. He was convinced of the truth of Christianity, made a public profession of his faith, was baptised, and made some sacrifices to his new religion. He remained, however, a total stranger to its principles, for he thought to purchase the privilege of communicating the Holy Ghost to all those on whom he might lay his hands, and was pronounced by St. Peter to be "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Acts viii. 23. If we only glance at the passages of scripture in which the actual possessor of Personal Religion is described, we shall uniformly find, that his state is wholly attributed to the communication of a new and divine principle. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Cor. v. 17. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. ii. 10. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto

unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." 1 Peter i. 22, 23.

There are several signs and effects of this new principle, which is the foundation of Personal Religion. The renewed mind attains a clear discernment of the nature of sin, and this induces a holy sorrow. (Jer. xxxi. 18, 19.) "I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner—for godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." 2 Cor. vii. 9. It includes an unfeigned humility, and an hatred of self. (Luke xv. 18, 19.) "God be merciful to me a sinner. Luke xviii. 13. There arises a strong feeling of solicitude for the salvation of the soul, "What must I do to be saved," Acts xvi. 30; which issues in fervent and humble prayer to God: "Behold he prayeth." Acts ix. 11. Our own righteousness is then renounced as unprofitable, in the great question of justification before God. "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. iii. 9.

Where Personal Religion exists, the individual will come out from the world. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus ii. 14. This passage contains a fine description of the Gospel, and of Personal Religion under its sacred influence. The grace, the blessing, the power, the holiness, of the Christian dispensation, are therein exhibited.

If we had more correct apprehensions of this dispensation, our enjoyments would be more transforming, and more elevating; we should never be tempted to prefer our own

righteousness to the righteousness of Christ, and our earth-born pleasures to the rich and permanent blessings of his religion. Do we ever feel the power of that sublime and impressive question "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Matt. xvi. 26.

Some ignorant and self-conceited enthusiasts deny the progressive nature of sanctification, which is one of the most evident truths in scripture. Are we not commanded to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ? (2 Peter iii. 18.) St. Paul, also, in his Epistles, discovers a deep concern that the Christian converts should individually grow in spiritual stature. It was not enough that he understood a church abounded with members, or that there were great external gifts, or even the power of working miracles, and displaying unexampled zeal; his earnest desire and prayer to God was, that they might abound more and more in all the graces of the Spirit, in the mind and temper of Jesus Christ, and in the fruits of righteousness, "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." Phil. i. 9, 10, 11. The apostle Peter also breathes the same spirit, in that fine description of Personal Religion, commencing with a true and living faith, and proceeding step by step, till our calling and election is made sure, and promises an abundant entrance into that heaven, where there is fulness of joy, in the presence of God, and at his right hand, pleasures for evermore. (2 Peter i. 5, 11; Psalm xvi. 11.)

The growth of Personal Religion is not only urged as a duty, and prayed for as a blessing; but it is beautifully illustrated by the most natural and impressive images. The

divine principle which forms the source of Personal Religion is compared to light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. (Prov. iv. 18.) It is compared to leaven, which, although it worketh slowly and imperceptibly, yet effectually insinuates itself into the whole mass. (Matt. xiii. 33.) It is set forth by the grain of mustard seed, which yields at last a tall, fruitful, and wide-spreading tree; (Matt. xiii. 31;) and to bread-corn, which produces, first, the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear. (Mark iv. 28.) It is also exhibited to us by the apostle, under the progress of animal life; and the spiritual stature of Christians is marked by the threefold appellation of fathers, young men, and little children. (1 John ii. 13.) The apostle Paul has several allusions of this kind: "Till we all come to the unity of the faith," Eph. iv. 12—16. The whole of this passage is natural and exquisitely beautiful.

The growth of Personal Religion must be universal, including knowledge, experience, and practice. If we were to advance in knowledge only, we should be vainly puffed up; and, while professing to be wise, should in works deny Christ. If we were to grow only in experience, our feelings, and the ardour of our zeal, would induce enthusiasm; and if we attached ourselves only to moral duties, we should soon become Pharisees, having much of the form, but denying the power of religion. When the Christian really grows, and his growth is healthful, and from the influence of the Holy Spirit, it is a growth, in which the principle of proportion is clearly discovered. If we were to grow in knowledge, and not in purity—in the confidence of faith, and not in filial fear—or in spiritual joy, and not in humility—our growth, instead of exhibiting the signs of healthful vigour and prosperity, would display those distortions and protuberances, which are symptoms of disease, frequently destroying life itself.

It is much easier to explain the nature, the origin, and the progress of Personal Religion, than it is to act upon its principles.

If we would increase in Personal Religion, we must pray for spiritual discernment and prudence, to guide us in the choice of appropriate means, and we must exert all diligence in the use of them. We may as well expect life and health to be continued to the body, without food, and air, and exercise, as expect spiritual life and growth in Personal Religion, without a divine influence, and a diligent and careful employment of all the means of grace. The apostle Paul was deeply impressed with this truth, when he said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. ii. 19. Our grace, wisdom, strength, and purity, must come from the fulness of Christ. (John i. 12—16; Phil. iv. 19.)

We must live a life of daily communion with God. We must walk with Him, as Enoch and Noah are said to have done. (Gen. v. 4, and vi. 9.) Having to wrestle, not only against flesh and blood, but also against principalities and powers, we must cultivate a spirit of constant, fervent, and believing prayer, which is urged by the apostle in the beautiful passage, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints," Eph. vi. 18. This praying always, with all prayer, has a continued influence upon our graces, our duties, our sentiments, our tempers, and our actions, giving them a spiritual direction, and an energy and stability, which they can acquire through no other medium. There must be an entire dependence upon the Holy Spirit for his teaching and purifying influence. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send

in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you," John xiv. 26. We constantly need a renewal of impressions, nor is this truth any where more generally and devoutly confessed, than in the devotional services of the Church of England.

Above all, my dear —— if you would grow in Personal Religion, you must keep at a distance from the company and pleasures of the world. Be assured, that the spirit, the opinions, the habits, and the conversation of worldly men, are all opposed to real religion, and therefore the apostle has given us this interesting exhortation, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty." 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

TO STUDENTS AND MINISTERS.

Every individual proposing to devote himself to a profession, if he be at all rightly impressed, carefully and seriously weighs its requirements, and adjourns his final decision, till he is satisfied that the plan he thinks of pursuing, is in itself a wise one, and that, as he advances in years, in knowledge, and in experience, he shall neither regret his decision, nor abandon it for some other.

The importance of this remark is so obvious in itself, and a proper attention to it is so requisite in contemplating the settlement of youth in some honourable and useful pursuit, that it is very seldom overlooked or forgotten; should it be

so, evil consequences generally follow. It is soon discovered that the individual has not been placed in a suitable station.—he has no spirit to apply himself to its required duties; of course he utterly neglects them, or attends to them with a reluctance and an indifference which naturally lead to their being imperfectly performed.

If these remarks are applicable in the general affairs of life, they will apply in a more especial manner to him, who intends to minister before the Lord in holy things. He who undertakes to cure the maladies of human nature, or to alleviate the pains by which they are accompanied, acts rashly, and hazards the life of the patient, if he is destitute of requisite knowledge and experience. He who assumes the command of an army destined to defend his country, ought to be influenced by a love of that country, and capacitated by his knowledge, experience, and courage, to perform the duties of a general.

Thus, in proportion as the interests of the Church of God exceed the interests of a nation, and as the value of immortal souls transcends all the earthly interests of man, including even life itself, so the importance of the character, principles, and qualifications of spiritual teachers, is above that of generals and physicians, and yet the care and expense devoted to the one, exceed what is expended on the other in an almost infinite degree.

Under the melancholy and alarming impression which this truth suggests, the writer feels anxious to engage the attention, the serious and undivided attention, of all theological students who are preparing for the work of the Christian Ministry, whether churchmen or dissenters, and whether intended for foreign missions or for home service. To such especially, and also to his brethren in the Ministry, in common with himself, the following questions are suggested. They are put in the character of a Minister, who wishes to

weigh the motives that induced him to enter the Christian Ministry; but the Student will not fail to see that many of them are directly applicable to his own case.

"Do I keep in constant remembrance that the institution of the Christian Ministry is a merciful provision of heaven, intended to produce great moral and spiritual effects upon the present and future happiness of man?"

"Am I aware that to assume the office of a spiritual teacher, either to occupy a genteel profession, or to acquire worldly honours and emoluments, is degrading and dishonourable to myself and offensive to God?"

"Do I examine sufficiently the motives which induced me to enter on this high and holy employment, or am I a mere hireling in the vineyard of Christ, ruining immortal souls by neglecting the duties of the Christian Ministry, and by being unfaithful to its principles?"

"Am I a real Christian, converted to God by the power of divine grace? one whom the Holy Spirit has convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and brought to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with the heart unto righteousness? Am I living in all his commandments blameless? Have I seen the evil of sin, and felt its bitterness? Do I recollect that the Holy Scriptures exact the most unequivocal and undeviating purity of heart and consistency of conduct, in all those who officiate in holy things? Do I not stand up between the living and true God, and the guilty descendants of Adam? Do not the Law—the Prophets—the Gospels—the Epistles, conspire to say, 'Be ye clean who bear the vessels of the Lord?'"

"Am I aware that, if I preach justification by works, either in whole or in part, I give up the atonement of Christ, prove that He has died in vain, and incur the guilt pointed out in Gal. i. 9?"

"Do I keep in recollection the principles on which my

Ministry should be framed, and the rules by which it must be exercised? Do I believe that men are guilty sinners, and in danger of eternal death? that Christ has died to make atonement, and that my office is to intreat them to partake of, and embrace, this inestimable blessing? that I have no liberty either to leave out, to alter, or to add to this message; and that the first and greatest of my anxieties should be to save the souls of those who hear me, by pointing out the necessity of repentance for sin, faith in Christ, regeneration by the Holy Spirit, with sanctification of heart and holiness of life, remembering that I am to teach these things with all authority? (Titus ii. 15.)"

"Do I know that the highest honour that can be conferred on the Christian Minister, is that he is sent to instruct the ignorant, and to rouse careless sinners,—'To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified?' Acts xxvi. 18."

"Many of those who have considered me as their spiritual teacher, have finished their mortal race. Have they died in their sins, and are they beyond the reach of mercy? Am I satisfied that they are not lost through my neglect and inattention? Did I warn them faithfully from the pulpit? Did I recommend them to read the Bible? Did I endeavour to get access to them when sick and dying? If I have neglected any of these duties, I have not done all that might —that ought to have been done."

"Are my time, talents, and influence in society, devoted to the service of my divine Master? Are they exerted to promote the honour and the salvation of the souls He has committed to my charge? Do I recollect that I am the sun of the sphere in which I am placed, and am I anxious that the rays should extend to the darkest cellar—to the meanest

cottage? Do worldly and trifling pursuits occupy my time, or do I attend to the frequent and solemn warnings addressed to Christian pastors, as 'Watch thou in all things—do the work of an evangelist—make full proof of thy ministry.' 2 Tim. iv. 5. 'Stir up the gift of God which is in thee.' 2 Tim. i. 6."

"Am I, as the Minister of Jesus Christ, anxious to promote union and co-operation among Christians? Am I active in the dispersion of the Bible, the conversion of the heathen, the diffusion of religious knowledge, and the promotion of Christian education?"

"Do I bear constantly in view the solemn day when my ministerial duties, and my opportunities of doing good, will not only have ceased, but when the Master will call for an account of my stewardship? Happy if, in that eventful hour, I can say, 'I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God.'"

It is evident, from the foregoing questions, that the office of a Christian Teacher involves duties and responsibilities of the highest and most solemn kind. To fulfil them well, there must be feelings appropriate, and a spirit of prayer to the Author of every good and perfect gift, that He would bestow grace and strength to meet the labours, the discouragements, and the trials of a Ministerial station; that, in the closing scene of life, we may say with the apostle,—"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

ON THE

PROMISES OF GOD TO THE WIDOW AND FATHERLESS.

Among the numberless excellencies which characterise the Holy Scriptures, the rich and substantial consolation which they offer to the afflicted, under every variety of circumstances and feelings to which they are subject in this valley of tears, is one of the brightest.

To select these promises from the sacred volume, and to arrange them in the distinct class to which they belong, that they may speak peace to the mourning spirit to whose afflictions they are appropriate, is a work of mercy, on which the blessing of heaven may be sought and expected. Many an oppressed and bewildered traveller in the journey of life, will be cheered by receiving these declarations of a compassionate Father and a faithful God. The tenderest encouragement is given to the most destitute—"Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me." Jer. xlix. 11.

How invaluable this promise from the God of the whole earth, who says, "the gold and the silver are mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." This great God, the possessor of heaven and earth, is the friend of the Fatherless and the Widow. Well, then, may they encourage themselves to trust in Him.

Not long since, you were blessed with an amiable, kind, and tender husband. He was, in your estimation, the best and most desirable gift of heaven, and you rejoiced in the abundance and extent of your felicity. If he were a joint heir with you of the grace of life; if you "took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company"—

he was so much the more valuable—*you* were so much the more happy in his society and friendship, and you were a large debtor to the goodness of God, who chose and appointed him to be your protector and friend. Amidst these airy dreams of human happiness, you thought peace and prosperity were completely established, and you were perhaps forgetful of the wants of the widows and the orphans who surrounded you. At such a moment of tranquillity, your sky assumed a dark and threatening aspect; a tremendous storm burst over you; that gourd, under the shade of which you had often reposed, and from the continuance of which you promised yourself so much delight—that gourd perished—the deepest pangs of agony wrung your agitated heart; bitter complaints issued from your lips, and life became a burden.

A Widow, dejected and desolate—the desire of your eyes taken from you, tells you of the mutable and uncertain nature of all earthly enjoyments, and proclaims in the most solemn and impressive accents, that they are broken cisterns, yielding only bitterness. You have leaned upon a broken reed, which is transformed into a spear, and has pierced you to the heart. Often had the inspired page told you, that on earth there was no permanent pleasure: often had you heard the admonition repeated, by the bereavements with which your friends had been visited; and God himself now says to you, "Hear the voice, and who hath appointed it." Does it not reprove you because you were forgetful and unthankful to Him, who, in his providence, gave you the husband you so deeply lament? and yet you did not give Him the glory, nor pray to Him to bless the gift, nor did you love the Giver. May you not say with the poet—

> To prize the gift was surely right,
> But through the folly of my heart,
> It hid the giver from my sight.

Sorrows, deep as yours, are not the effect of chance. God does not afflict the children of men willingly, nor for his own pleasure, but for their profit. You should say, "Show me wherefore thou contendest with me;" Job x. 2: and remember the words of the apostle, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby," Heb. xii. 11.

Should such effects as these arise out of the great loss you have sustained, it will be your present, your eternal gain. It may be, that the Lord has taken away your idol, that he might convince you of sin, that he might show you the folly of trusting in earthly enjoyments for your happiness, saying to you, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest;" Micah, ii. 10.: "Give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways;" Prov. xxiii. 26.: "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." Col. iii. 2. . In the days of your happiness, you forgot the interests of your immortal spirit. The Bible and the church were neglected: prayer to God in secret was probably forgotten, or performed with indifference. A loud warning has sounded in your ears—listen to the powerful voice; forsake the vanities of the world, and trust in your Saviour for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Trust not in your own righteousness, nor in the mere form and profession of religion.

But my object is not merely to reprove and admonish you: I would administer the balm of consolation, by offering to you the promises given in holy writ. Read them with attention; treasure them up in your memory, and in your heart. Early did the Lord say, "Ye shall not afflict any widow;" Exod. xxii. 22.: and, to give weight to his commands, He describes Himself as their advocate; (Malachi iii. 5., Psalm lxviii. 5.) "To visit the fatherless and widows" is made an evidence of pure and undefiled religion. (James i. 27.) You need the care

and blessing of this tender and merciful God, who invites you to depend upon Him. He can supply your wants, protect you from your enemies, avenge your wrongs, and make the days of your widowhood to abound in peace and comfort, providing friends for you and your fatherless children. Carefully read, and earnestly pray over, the history of such widows as are mentioned in the holy scriptures; cherish their temper, and follow their example. Their history furnishes a practical comment on Psalm xxxvii. 3. "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." The widow of Sarepta was one who trusted in the Lord, practising self-denial and liberality, when she divided the scanty remains of her meal with his prophet. Naomi, the widow of Elimelech, was a woman of much affliction, and had a succession of bereavements. Ruth, her daughter-in-law, was also a widow, poor and distressed; but the God in whom she trusted, and to whose service and glory they were both sincerely devoted, appeared for them. In the New Testament, we read that our Lord raised the only son of a widow, and observed and commended the zeal of her who cast two mites into the treasury. Seeing then, that God honours those who honour Him, and that it is his blessing which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow, let Him be your counsellor and guide; give Him an ascendancy in your affection; by devout and frequent prayer, seek the Saviour of sinners, confide in Him who went to Bethany to weep over the grave, and to comfort the sisters of Lazarus—in Him who is the fairest of ten thousand, and altogether lovely. If your obtain His favour, you will possess immense riches, unfading honour, and infinite happiness; then your mourning shall cease, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

ON THE

IMPROPRIETY OF CHRISTIANS MAKING A PROVERBIAL USE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

"Ye have perverted the words of the living God." Jer. xxiii. 36.

"Jest not with the two-edged sword of God's word. Will nothing please thee to wash thy hands in, but the font? or to drink health in, but the church chalice?"—*Fuller.*

Whatever tends to lessen our reverence for the Sacred Scriptures, must be evil, as it weakens an influence which should be cherished with care and diligence. It has been with surprise and pain, that I have heard the delightful and awful truths of the Bible quoted in the most playful and irreverent manner. If, indeed, it be true, that "where the word of a king is, there is power," how much more authoritative should we esteem the words of the King of kings—of Him who has said, "I am He that killeth, and He that maketh alive?" His voice is full of majesty; his word is true and righteous altogether. He therefore only claims his unalienable right, when He peremptorily says, "Ye shall reverence my statutes;" this divine and solemn injunction is applicable to all characters, from the highest to the lowest. It would not be inconsistent for an infidel to make a jest book of that volume, which we denominate the Holy Scriptures, and on which we rest our dearest hopes of salvation, and of eternal life—but, for Christians to indulge in a practice so indicative of levity and irreligion, is an unquestionable reproach to themselves, and a dishonour to that lovely name by which they are called.

But if there be any one class, upon whom a reverence for

this sacred book is more imperative than another, it is the ministers of Christ, who stand between the living God and sinful men, and whose duty it is to explain and enforce the heavenly lessons which are exhibited in the volume of Inspiration. Clothed with an office of such dignity,—placed in situations of such deep responsibility to God and man—should it not be their first and highest duty to evince their own personal regard to the Bible? It is essential to its successful interpretation, that they should impress the people with a conviction of their unfeigned respect and esteem for its wise and holy contents; and by this only, can they promote the same feeling in those, to whom they are appointed to explain and prove the truths thereof.

Among the multitude and variety of ways in which man becomes amenable to the laws and justice of God, there is one too little considered. This is, what the Scriptures entitle, the iniquities of our holy things. All sin is condemned in the Christian code of laws; but if there be any sin particularly hateful to God, and injurious to ourselves, it is a desecration of that, which God accounts holy. The law given to Israel, on this subject, was most explicit and solemn. "They shall not profane the holy things of the children of Israel, which they shall offer unto the Lord." Lev. xxii. 15.

How highly censurable then must be the profanation of the words of Holy Writ, by the wanton application of them to ordinary purposes, in a spirit of familiar playfulness, and connected with the ludicrous and the ridiculous? The Lord might say, "I have sent unto them the great things of my Law, and they have counted it a strange thing." The Word of God is holy, given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and should be approached with a sanctified heart, touched with a sanctified hand, and its truths pronounced with sanctified lips.

Men of the world will think me righteous over-much, but

I shall have the approval of genuine Christians, of those who know the difference between things which are common, and things which are holy. They know how to distinguish between the precious and the vile; they will not—they must not—they dare not—cast pearls before swine; they dare not cast that which is holy to dogs: and yet this is done by all, who take the words of Holy Writ, to show their wit and ingenuity, in making a good pun, a smart repartee, or a laughable allusion.

Of those men who thus profanely use the holy and weighty truths of Revelation, I must express my deliberate and unqualified censure, as I believe it to be a sinful and daring contempt of the word and authority of God, and fraught with the most mischievous consequences to the parties themselves, and to every company in which they perpetrate this high offence against the honour and the purity of sacred things. Can those, who are chargeable with this heinous offence, think for a moment of the threatenings of that Law, which the great Jehovah pronounced amidst thunders and lightnings, and of the promises of the new covenant, which Jesus Christ sealed on Calvary with his own blood? If these promises, which are the basis of our faith and hope, be really valuable—I ask the Christian, the Christian senator, and above all, the Christian minister, if it be prudent—if it be lawful—to make these grand, these sublime, these holy things, the subject of his sportive and playful imagination, or of his ingenious and witty application. Against this often recurring and powerful temptation may we continually watch and pray, ever remembering the words of the apostle, in Ephesians iv. 29. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

ON THE

MEEKNESS AND GENTLENESS OF CHRIST.

THE Redeemer of the Church is described in the Holy Scriptures, as the light of the world—to communicate light to those, that sit in darkness and the shadow of death; and He expects that all whom He enlightens, should transmit the light received from Him, to others. In the sermon on the mount, He gave this solemn and appropriate charge to his disciples. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. v. 14. 16. If ministers of Jesus Christ, by their doctrine and example, shed light around them, how much more was this accomplished by the ministry and example of their divine Master, from whom they received both their commission and their qualifications.

We do not here intend to enter on the matchless excellencies which shone in the character and temper of Him, who was the Founder of our Faith. We shall take one prominent feature only, to resemble Him in which, is the honour and happiness of his disciples on earth, and will issue in a full resemblance in the heavenly world, when they shall "awake up in his image." That the blessed Jesus would be meek and gentle, was the subject of prophecy. "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets." Isaiah xlii. 2. "In thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness." Psalm xlv. 4.

This lovely trait in the Redeemer's character, is shadowed forth in types and metaphorical allusions. As the good

Shepherd, He is to gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. Isaiah xl. 11. "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." Isaiah liii. 7. The gentleness and meekness, thus pourtrayed in the prophecies, were fully illustrated in his life and ministry.

Gentleness and meekness were not merely incidental qualities in the character of Christ, but were essential to the discharge of his mediatorial duties, as the Prophet, Priest, and King in Zion. In each of these offices, the Saviour had to endure reproaches, indignities, and sufferings; and the apostles have exhibited these in their writings, and grounded upon the temper with which He endured them, some appropriate exhortations to afflicted, tempted, and persecuted Christians, that they might be excited to the same spirit. In the epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul says, "I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." He stimulates the Hebrews to a patient endurance of all their afflictions and persecutions, saying, "Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Heb. xii. 3. The apostle Peter, who was an eye-witness of the Redeemer's gentleness, has thus applied it to a practical and holy use. "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. 1 Pet. ii. 19. 23.

While our Saviour exhibits a dove-like gentleness in his own character and conduct, He has stamped this heavenly feature upon his religion; and, in proportion as we are destitute of, and opposed to it, we are deficient in the evidence of being Christians, and disgrace the name by which we are called. The gentleness which the religion of Jesus Christ breathes through its whole texture, is opposed to every religion of the heathen, and, equally so, to the persecuting and intolerant religion of Popery, and of every corrupt edition of Christianity. The cruelties and miseries entailed by these, made the religion of Christ, with whose name they have been associated, appear odious and cruel.

Let us recollect, that the gentleness of Christ was inculcated by the Redeemer, upon the disciples, when He gave them their first commission. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Matt. x. 16. This law is imperative upon all who profess to be the disciples and ministers of Christ. St. Paul, than whom there was not a more bold or zealous propagator of the faith, exhibited much of this heavenly spirit, and appeals to the Christians of Thessalonica. "We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children." 1 Thess. ii. 7. And when writing to young ministers, whose youthful ardour exposed them to the temptation of being too warm and too ardent, he enforced the cultivation of this temper. To one he says, "Shewing all meekness unto all men;" Titus iii. 2: and on another he urges the maintenance of the same spirit, even in the most trying circumstances: "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves. 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.

If this meekness and gentleness be so desirable and important in the pastors of the Christian Church, it cannot be less so, in the character of all its members. In the epistles, they

are entreated to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love." Eph. iv. 1, 2. "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another." Coloss. iii. 12. And the apostle James says, "Who is a wise man and imbued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." James iii. 13.

But the writer in the New Testament, whose exhortations breathe the language and spirit of meekness and gentleness most ardently, is the beloved disciple. He had not only leaned upon his Master's bosom, but appears to have imbibed the largest measure of his Master's spirit and temper, and every page of his writings teems with the lovely spirit of meekness and gentleness, making the very essence of religion to be love to God, and love to men.

In direct opposition to the spirit and letter of the Christian religion, some who bear the name of Christians, indulge a temper, and pursue a line of conduct, highly derogatory to the honour and interests of true religion; proving the absence of that wisdom which "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. James iii. 17.

What is it that makes the world a scene of contention and confusion? The absence of that mind which was in Christ, and the indulgence of tempers, fit only for the regions where the god of this world holds his court. All must be peaceful and heavenly, where the Redeemer sways His mild and godlike sceptre, and where the atmosphere is congenial to the growth of peace and love.

ON SANCTIFICATION.

In the unity and harmony of the material world, consist its beauty and perfection. Were the heavenly bodies to wander from their appointed orbits, disorder and confusion must ensue; but God having established his works of creation upon the principles of order and unity, every operation is performed with punctuality, and the whole continues to display the wisdom, goodness, and power of Him who made it. Is not the same unity and harmony, and, consequently, the same beauty and perfection, visible in the great plan of our Redemption, in which the divine glory is manifested for the salvation of sinners? There wisdom and beauty are complete; as its doctrines, promises, ordinances, and consolations harmonise to diffuse happiness, and to counteract the love and power of sin.

What is it that presents the most powerful obstruction to the spread of that Gospel, which reveals and proclaims salvation by Christ, as a free gift to sinners? It is the disorganization of this great plan by human wisdom. Some deny the deity, and the atonement of the Son of God. Many expunge the great Protestant doctrine of justification by faith. Some substitute baptismal regeneration for the scriptural washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Others deduce false inferences from the Gospel, as it respects the divine Law, and the great question of Sanctification by the Holy Spirit. The latter is not the least of those imaginary corrections, which the wisdom, or rather the folly, of man, has introduced into these new editions of the Gospel; and which have so disfigured, and dishonoured the

highest effort of infinite wisdom, and the most valuable blessing God has given to the children of men.

To form the Christian character, the nature, necessity, and medium of Sanctification must be correctly understood, and rightly appreciated.

When the depravity and deceitfulness of the human heart are considered, an enlightened mind will understand why the principles of Christianity should be counterfeited. There is not any part of the Gospel so completely opposed to the nature of degraded man, as the Sanctification described in the New Testament; that internal and spiritual purity which lays the axe to the root of all that is sinful, and diffuses a holy influence through body, soul, and spirit.

The disciple of Mahomet performs his frequent ablutions, and thinks these, sufficient to purify and save. The Roman Catholic substitutes for the heavenly purity of the Holy Spirit, extreme unction, and holy water. Some Protestants attribute to the baptismal water, and the sacramental symbols of the Lord's table, the same virtue. Others imagine, like the Pharisee of old, that the essence of evangelical purity, lies in a moral deportment towards men, and a fulfilment of certain duties which we owe to God.

These fallacious and unscriptural views of Sanctification leave their advocates destitute of true and scriptural regeneration.

Sanctification is a renewal of the mind, will, and affections, produced by the divine agency of the Holy Spirit. The principle is diffusive. The powers of the soul, thoughts, motives, and actions are changed; "Old things have passed away, behold all things are become new." 2 Cor. v. 17. A love of holiness, and an abhorrence of sin, show the power of this new influence, which discovers a holy sensibility on the most distant approach of evil, even shuddering at its appearance. A tenderness of conscience is established, which issues in the

soul desiring to be holy, because Christ is holy. The devout and constant prayer then is, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm cxxxix. 23, 24.

Sanctification is necessarily interwoven with the texture of genuine Christianity, and is essential to the existence of every true Christian. Judas was nominally a disciple; he had knowledge and zeal, and had doubtless been baptised in the name of his Master, but he had not this great feature of Christianity. He was the son of perdition—there had been no vital principle implanted, no sanctifying influence communicated, and, consequently, there were no fruits of holiness. There can be no communion with God, unless an attachment to sinful pleasures be entirely subdued. Christians are called to be saints; (Romans i. 7.) a holy and peculiar people. (Titus ii. 14.) How fatal is the delusion of those, who imagine that the absence of personal holiness is supplied by the multitude, frequency, and punctuality of their ceremonial observances and acts of public devotion. Alas! they forget that the want of this Sanctification vitiates all these. Let such professors of Christianity hear the solemn address of the prophet to the house of Israel—"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear." Isaiah i. 11 and four following verses. The king of Israel said, "If I

regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.' Psalm lxvi. 19.

Sanctification is essential to our coming into relationship with the true Church of God, who receive Christ as their head and law-giver, and who engage to live in the purity and love of the Gospel; no man can enjoy the privileges, or perform the duties, of a consistent member of such Church, if he has not been sanctified by the truth. That peace of conscience, and that joy in the Holy Ghost, of which the apostle frequently speaks, arise from the implantation of this holy principle. Sin is the torment of the human heart, a worm at the root of earthly and mental happiness. The gay and the thoughtless seem to live in peace; but the language of inspired truth is, "There is no peace to the wicked;" "the way of peace have they not known." Their consciences are agitated at the slightest touch of disease, and if there be any prospect of death, they resemble Felix, who, when Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, trembled; there is a joy which the lovers of sin possess, but it is well described by the wise man, "As the crackling of thorns under the pot." The joy, the hope, and the triumph of those, whose hearts are not sanctified by the Spirit, is consumed by the cares and afflictions attendant on human life.

Sanctification is an integral part of our salvation, and so inseparably connected with it, that we cannot be loved by the Father, and justified by the righteousness of Christ, without being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. If we are not exhibiting the proof of a sanctified nature, and bearing the fruits of righteousness, every thing in our religion is merely profession. Our Lord has given a high tone to the necessity of Sanctification. "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they may be sanctified through the truth."

Sanctification is essential to a tranquil and happy death.

"The sting of death is sin;" if that sting be not extracted, there must be pain and torment, which can be avoided only by sin being pardoned, and the love and power of it subdued. The following passage beautifully portrays the character of him who may be expected to close his mortal career happily. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." Psalm xxxvii. 37. The man after God's own heart said, "I shall be satisfied when I awake up in thy likeness;" and heaven is attractive to the Christian, as a place of perfect holiness—there dwell the spirits of just men made perfect. Sanctification, is as essential to our admission into this kingdom, as justification. It is declared in the Holy Scriptures, that the unrighteous "shall not inherit the kingdom of God."—"But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Cor. vi. 10, 11. It is evident, from this passage, that the righteous, who shall enter into the kingdom of God, are not only justified in the name of Christ, but are also sanctified by the Spirit of God. This renewing principle entered into the Father's eternal purpose. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification:" and again, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Romans viii. 29. Christians may say, with St. Paul, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. ii. 10.

The Sanctification of fallen man is through the divine agency of the Holy Spirit. There are some who think they honour Christ, by confounding the work of the divine persons in the economy of Redemption. It is opposing their own wisdom and inclination to the wisdom and counsels of God.

The difference existing between Justification and Sanctification correctly exhibits the agency by which each is accom-

plished. We are justified, in the name, and through the obedience and death of Christ—we are sanctified, by the grace and power of the Holy Ghost—we are justified, by a righteousness wrought out for us, and imputed to us on believing—our sanctification, is wrought in us—our justification, is one complete and entire act of infinite mercy—our sanctification is progressive, through the means of Christian ordinances, and the dispensations of divine Providence; but neither ordinances, nor providences, operate in advancing our sanctification, without the influence of the Spirit, which strengthens every holy tendency and principle. Faith has an omnipotent and extensive power in this regenerating change; for it is said "to purify the heart, to work by love, and to overcome the world." Joy and peace are intimately connected with Sanctification, as they can only thrive and grow in connexion with tenderness of conscience.

Love is also a powerful and active medium of promoting our Sanctification. Love to Christ leads his disciples to Gethsemane and Calvary, and fixes their meditation upon the sufferings and death of their best Friend. The fear of offending God, as our Father, operates to subdue and to restrain the corrupt affections of the human soul, and strengthens it, in the ardent pursuit of an habitual and increasing conformity to the divine nature.

ON THE

NEGLECT OF WEEKLY LECTURES AMONGST PROTESTANT DISSENTERS.

THE enlarged liberality which is exhibited in the support of our numerous institutions to promote the religion of Christ, and the cordiality and co-operation subsisting between different denominations, would induce the belief that there is a wide diffusion of religious principle. But there are signs of apathy, and even of declension, that make a retrograde movement too apparent. The devotions of the closet, and worship in the family, are not easily brought within the range of our examination; but that constant and serious attendance in the house of God, which prevailed some years since, is not equalled in the present day.

The declension referred to, is evident from the indifference existing towards those Lectures in the week, which were, formerly, attended as a duty and a privilege. The morning Lectures in the metropolis are now nearly deserted.

If merchants and tradesmen are too much occupied to attend morning service, the female part of their families might steal one hour in the week, from their ordinary cares and duties, to promote the higher interests of the soul. A still larger number of both sexes might be expected to attend those evening Lectures where a list of interesting subjects is printed, which embrace an excellent mixture of the doctrinal, the experimental, and the practical parts of Christianity. Those who neglect and forsake public ordinances, forget the promise, "In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee." Exod. xx. 24.

To ascertain the causes of this extensive and habitual neglect of week-day services, and to induce a more general attendance, are duties incumbent on ministers. If we could effect the latter, it would promote the spiritual improvement of individuals, and would cheer and encourage those ministers, who feel it a duty to continue the service for the very small number who attend.

The neglect of Weekly Lectures arises from various causes; some of them no argument will weaken or destroy. There are Dissenters who think attendance once or twice on the Sunday, quite enough for all the purposes of making their peace with God, and securing their eternal happiness. These persons seldom witness the commencement of the worship; yet, if it be extended a few minutes beyond the accustomed time, their tempers are disturbed, their devotion spoiled, and they inwardly sigh the language of those who said of the Sabbath, "What a weariness—when will it be over?" Their evening engagements during the week are never in the service of God, but at the dance, at the card table, or in the theatre. Here they breathe their native air, and pursue their course with spirit and energy till the approach of midnight, without any apparent symptom of that weariness and disgust, which is so frequent and so evident in their devotions on the Sabbath. From such Dissenters, a cold and a casual attendance on the Sabbath is all that can be expected, and therefore to plead with *them* would be hopeless.

There are however some, of whom we would hope better things, as they evidence in their conduct a desire to perform the duties of religion, and to enjoy its blessings.

The universal change which has taken place in the habits and routine of commercial transactions, has assisted to produce a neglect of Lectures in the week. Merchants and tradesmen commence their business at a later hour than formerly, and are dining when their ministers are entering the

pulpit; and, while these faithful pastors are praying that the influences of the Spirit may descend on them, and that they may make progress in knowledge, grace, and holiness, they seem by their absence to say, "We care little for these blessings; we must be diligent in business, and conform to the customs and habits of those, with whom it must be transacted." Industry is a duty, but activity in the affairs of this life is not the whole of our duty. The maxim of the apostle should be acted on,—"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Let the counting-house, the exchange, and the warehouse, have each its due proportion; but let not God, Religion, and Eternity, be either forgotten or slighted.

The question is; Ought not business to be so arranged, and time so prudently distributed, as to secure one or two hours for the house and ordinances of God, and for that preparedness of mind, which the most active man would wish for, when he is commanded to lay aside his pen and his cheque-book, that he may retire to his chamber and die?

The modern insatiable desire for riches, leads to the sacrifice of all, that is most valuable in morals and in religion. Christians forget that they who will be rich "fall into divers temptations;" their thoughts, their affections, and their energies are devoted with so much intenseness to the things which are temporal, that their hearts become cold and indisposed to those which are eternal. Our Lord said, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matt. xvi. 26. This overwhelming anxiety, while it indisposes the mind for sabbath-day duties, induces a total withdrawment from public worship in the week, removes all the guards and fences with which the professor of religion was for a time surrounded, and subjects him to the inroads and machinations of that vigilant and malignant enemy,